



2023-2024

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of Communication Studies

Communication for Sport Professionals, Undergraduate Certificate

Sport Communication Professionals Certificate Goal

Goal Description:

The Department's goal is to create awareness about this program because it went live in January 2024. It is necessary to advertise the program in order to get students to enroll in the program. We hope to be allowed access to IMC to create a marketing plan and materials to promote the certificate.

Providing Department: Communication for Sport Professionals, Undergraduate Certificate

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Sport Communication Professionals Certificate Marketing Performance Objective

Performance Objective Description:

The Department will work with Enrollment Marketing and SHSU Online to develop and run paid advertising to raise awareness about our programs. In addition, the Department will assign the social media create committee to explore the creation and development of a social media presence.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Sport Communication Professionals KPI & Target

KPI Description:

The criteria for achieving this goal will be:

- The creation and running of the paid advertising
- Creating and adding program information to the advertising landing page on the website
- Committee work product (social media presence/content)

Target Description:

The criteria for achieving this goal will be:

- Enrollment Marketing's report on the ad views, etc.
- Applications/declarations for the certificate
- Social media platforms were maintained and active

Results Description:

As Departments no longer have free access to meet with Enrollment Marketing (IMC), it has been exceptionally difficult to get marketing materials and impossible to meet with anyone to discuss how best to advertise any of the certificates. A Communication Studies faculty member who has an art undergraduate degree was able to create digital flyers to place on screens in buildings. We were also able to secure one IMC half sheet flyer.

As this certificate became available after the publication of the 2024-2025 Catalog, there are currently no applications or students enrolled in the program.

Due to when the program became available, the Department will create social media posts in the upcoming academic calendar year.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Sport Communication Professionals

Action Description:

This is a new program that does not currently have students enrolled. Assessments will begin when they have enrollment.

The criteria for achieving this goal will be:

- Enrollment Marketing's report on the ad views, etc.
- Applications/declarations for the certificate
- Social media platforms were maintained and active

New Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

This is a new unit for the 2023-2024 cycle. No previous PCI available.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

This is a new unit for the 2023-2024 cycle. No previous PCI available.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

Program Growth & Recruiting

In order to facilitate growth, the unit hopes to work with the Office of Enrollment Marketing (IMC) to create develop and run ad campaigns to increase awareness about this program. The focus will be demonstrating the content and benefits of the program for undergraduates seeking an additional credential.

Communication Studies BA/BS

Application Of Theory (Goal)

Goal Description:

To develop student understanding and utilization of communication theory in all major communication contexts, including the development of critical thinking skills. These contexts include interpersonal and family relationships, small group professional and business situations, and public/media messages. Examples of communication theories include, but are not limited to, expectancy violations theory, social penetration theory, relational dialectics theory, social judgment theory, cognitive dissonance theory, cultivation theory, agenda-setting theory, face-negotiation theory, and standpoint theory.

Providing Department: Communication Studies BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Applying Communication Theory (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduates will be able to apply communication theory to specific communication contexts.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Application Of Theory (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure attainment of Goal 1 through an annual evaluation of a sample of final student term papers in 3300 and 4300 level courses, such as Intercultural Communication, Small Group Communication, Nonverbal Communication, Communication Theory, and Family Communication. The first component of this rubric is Evidence of Understanding of the Applicable Theory or Theories including the Effective Connection of the Theory or Theories to Communication Behavior. The scale for measuring this degree objective will be the same throughout the department's set of objectives for BA/BS students.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal. An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

1. Each SACs committee member was tasked to evaluate five courses per semester. Therefore, 17 undergrad course three graduate courses were evaluated each semester, resulting in 40 courses across the academic year.
2. All means in the table below are based on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest rating.
3. I have previously sent you the pre- and post-test data for B&P and Public Speaking. I am attaching that email chain here.
4. Finally, I want to highlight the hard work, time, and effort [@Arrington, Michael](#), [@Horne, Dena](#), and [@Weikle, Kelly](#) put into these evaluations. They did a phenomenal job!

	Fall 2023 Undergraduate	Spring 2024 Undergraduate
<i>Theory/Concept (Explanation)</i>	4.15	4.12
<i>Theory/Concept (Application)</i>	4.27	4.24

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Student Application Of Theory (Action)

Action Description:

While the criterion for students learning to apply communication theory was met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty will meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department. Faculty will be encouraged to develop assignments that stress the importance of understanding and applying theory in their personal and professional experiences.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Mastery Of Written Composition (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

The second component of this rubric is Control of the Mechanics of Written Composition. Student papers were submitted to faculty reviewers who assigned scores based on: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal

Criterion Description:

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome that the students are capable of applying their knowledge of communication theory and their skill in critical thinking in written communication.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

- 1. Each SACs committee member was tasked to evaluate five courses per semester. Therefore, 17 undergrad course three graduate courses were evaluated each semester, resulting in 40 courses across the academic year.
- 2. All means in the table below are based on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest rating.
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	Fall 2023 Undergraduate	Spring 2024 Undergraduate
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<i>Writing Skill (Grammar)</i>	4.16	4.20
<i>Writing Skill (Organization)</i>	4.30	4.47

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Student Mastery Of Written Composition (Action)

Action Description:

While the criterion for students learning to apply communication theory was met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty will meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department. Faculty will be encouraged to develop assignments that stress the importance of understanding and applying theory in their personal and professional experiences.

Communication Presentations (Goal)

Goal Description:

To train students (majors and nonmajors alike) to make a variety of effective communication presentations in different professional, educational, and social contexts. These presentations include informative and persuasive speeches, group decision making discussions, and interviews.

Providing Department: Communication Studies BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Communication Presentations (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduates will be able to communicate effectively in a variety of oral communication situations. A part of a good oral presentation includes an outline that helps to organize and structure oral presentations.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Communication Presentations: Speech Outlines (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure attainment of the outline/writing skills goal through an evaluation of the student speech outlines accompanying the final student presentations. Students will take a pre and post test to demonstrate the effectiveness of performance classes.

Criterion Description:

The criterion for success is a statistical significant difference in the pre and post test.

Findings Description:

Fall 2023

Importantly, 290ish and 260ish students completed the pre and post-test surveys, respectively. However, duplicate cases and missing data affected the overall sample when I matched the pre- and post-test results together; roughly 160 students completed both the pre- and post-test surveys. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statistic	p
Writing Skills	3.72	4.18	.45	5.54	.001
Research Skills	3.76	4.23	.48	6.14	.001

Students' post-test writing skills were significantly higher than the pre-test writing skills.

Students' post-test research skills were significantly higher than the pre-test research skills.

Spring 2024

In total, we had 160 paired responses (pre- and post-test reports), which is consistent with the Fall. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statisti c	p	Cohen’s D
Writing Skills	3.78	4.24	.44	6.47	.001	.53 (Moderate Effect Size
Research Skills	3.75	4.25	.50	6.75	.001	.54 (Moderate Effect Size)

Students' post-test writing skills were significantly higher than the pre-test writing skills.

Students' post-test research skills were significantly higher than the pre-test research skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Communication Presentations: Speech Outlines (Action)

Action Description:

Scores indicated that on the whole students demonstrate outline competency, but the faculty should continue to work to improve the outline score for all students in the coming academic year. Faculty will be reminded about the Department Outline Instruction Document. They will be encouraged to share the document with students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Communication Presentations: Student Speeches (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure attainment of the outline/writing skills goal through an evaluation of the student speech outlines accompanying the final student presentations. Students will take a pre and post test to demonstrate the effectiveness of performance classes.

Criterion Description:

The criterion for success is a statistical significant difference in the pre and post test.

Findings Description:

Fall 2023

Importantly, 290ish and 260ish students completed the pre and post-test surveys, respectively. However, duplicate cases and missing data affected the overall sample when I matched the pre- and post-test results together; roughly 160 students completed both the pre- and post-test surveys. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statistic	p
Presentation Skills	3.86	4.14	.47	6.82	.001

Students' post-test presentation skills were significantly higher than the pre-test presentation skills.

Spring 2024

In total, we had 160 paired responses (pre- and post-test reports), which is consistent with the Fall. Important note: Research Skills, Writing Skills, and Presentation Skills were measured on a five-point Likert-type scales.

Variable	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Mean Difference	t statisti c	p	Cohen’s D
Presentation Skill s	3.74	4.19	.45	7.76	.001	.63 (Moderate Effect Size)

Students' post-test presentation skills were significantly higher than the pre-test presentation skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Communication Presentations: Student Speeches (Action)

Action Description:

Scores indicated that on the whole students demonstrate public speaking competency, but the faculty should continue to work to improve the speaking score for all students in the coming academic year. Faculty will be reminded about the Department Outline Instruction Document because strong outlines produce strong speeches. They will be encouraged to share the document with students and to help students exhibit good public speaking practices.

Research Literacy (Goal)

Goal Description:

To develop student competencies in locating, understanding, assessing, and reporting communication research findings. This includes training in the use of print and electronic database sources and focuses attention on published scholarly research. It also includes training in the use of computer software appropriate for the word processing of reports and the use of online research sources.

Providing Department: Communication Studies BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Research Literacy (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduates will be able to assess and report the results of communication research found in refereed scholarly journals as well as in electronic and online databases.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Research Literacy (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure research literacy goal with an annual evaluation of a sample of student papers involving reviews of literature reviews assigned in such courses as Introduction to Communication Theory and Communication Theory. The *first component of this rubric* is evidence of a comprehensive knowledge of a confined research area. Included in this rubric is an assessment of each student's mastery of digital searches, the evaluation of sources, etc. from databases such as Communication Abstracts, Mass Media Complete, PsychInfo, and similar online databases.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal.

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

- 1. Each SACs committee member was tasked to evaluate five courses per semester. Therefore, 17 undergrad course three graduate courses were evaluated each semester, resulting in 40 courses across the academic year.
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	Fall 2023 Undergraduate	Spring 2024 Undergraduate
<i>Research Skill</i>	3.83	3.46

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Research Literacy (Action)

Action Description:

The criterion for students' research literacy was met, but faculty will be encouraged to help our students continue to improve. With that in mind, faculty will meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department.

Ways to enhance and encourage undergraduate research will be discussed and implemented. Faculty will be encouraged to get students to submit papers to *The Measure* and to other academic outlets/conventions.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

New Faculty

The department unexpectedly lost two tenure/tenure track faculty members at the end of this academic year. We were able to hire two new faculty to maintain the number of full time tenure track faculty. Unfortunately, the intent with the spring job posting was to increase the number of FTEs. The next step will be to meet with the CHSS Dean and develop a plan to move forward with our efforts to increase the number of full time faculty positions.

Program Growth

The goal is to continue trying to grow undergraduate enrollment. The department will again partner with Enrollment Marketing and SHSU to raise awareness of our programs, course offerings, and career opportunities for graduates.

During the past year we have looked for opportunities to collaborate with other departments. We will continue to pursue those possibilities. In the upcoming cycle we will try to reach out to other colleges and departments.

Proposal of Certificates

In the upcoming cycle we will begin offering our approved certificate (Communication for Criminal Justice and Legal Studies). We will be waiting final approval for our the other two certificates we have proposed. We will also work with the appropriate disciplines and Enrollment Marketing to promote these new free standing certificates as they become available.

Linked-In Learning

In the coming year the department will continue to encourage undergraduate faculty to incorporate Linked-In Learning badges in their courses. This will help students show employers the variety of skills they have learned in our program before they even get an interview.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Closing Summary

Over all, the unit was very successful in this assessment cycle. The goal is to continue meeting or exceeding our benchmarks. In order to continue to improve in the coming cycle the unit should:

New Faculty Integration

We hired two new assistant professors during the last cycle. The new faculty were encouraged to participate in PACE and they were assigned a faculty mentor. The new faculty members were encouraged to participate in committees, meetings, and department and campus activities. The chair maintained an open door policy in order to answer any questions. The two new faculty settled into the department and are thriving.

Strategic Planning

The unit acted within the goals of the University's strategic plan. There was a strong focus on student success. Faculty met with students, mentored students, and encouraged students to show case their research at conferences and in *The Measure*. The department maintained social media presence, departmental events, etc.

Program Growth Recruiting

Unfortunately we were not allowed to work with the Office of Enrollment Marketing (IMC) in the fall. Further as we were not allowed to talk to the Carnegie company running our late spring and summer advertising, the Department is unsure if any undergraduate ads were placed. It is entirely possible that ads were limited to the graduate program. The unit has been unsuccessful in getting any assistance with marketing our three new undergraduate certificates.

New Program Certificates

The three proposed certificates have all been approved and added to the catalog. The Department hops to be able work with IMC to develop a marketing campaign to raise awareness about these new programs.

LinkedIn Learning

Faculty will be encouraged to continue to use LinkedIn Learning in their courses to help students build a bridge from education to employment.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

1. Curriculum Review & Development:

- Conduct a review of the graduate curriculum to ensure it reflects current trends in the discipline. Add or delete undergraduate courses as needed.

2. Faculty Enhancement:

- Professional Development: Encourage faculty to engage in professional development opportunities including workshops, active learning, conferences, etc. to improve their teaching skills & innovation.
- Research Support: Provide resources and support for faculty-student research projects by encouraging publication and participation in and travel to academic conferences.

3. Research and Innovation:

- Encourage students to submit to the Measure and undergraduate conferences.
- Encourage faculty to work with undergraduates on research projects.

4. Teaching Excellence:

- Encourage faculty to participate in a peer review system for teaching, and/or use PACE for teaching reviews.
- Encourage faculty to seek workshops and seminars to improve their instruction.
- Support faculty to pursue certifications in teaching and learning.
- Encourage faculty to attend the annual PACE Teaching and Learning Conference.
- Support interdisciplinary teaching via faculty guest lectures, the Honors College, and/or co-teaching with other departments.
- Encourage Develop strategies to increase student engagement and participation in the classroom (active learning, experiential learning, service learning).

5. Service:

- Participate in Department events such as Lambda Pi Eta and Communication Day to meet and engage undergraduates.
- Encourage faculty to be active in Department committees to move the Department forward.
- Attend graduation, Bearkat Kickoff, New student Convocation, etc.

Communication Studies MA / Communication Studies Certificate

Research Literacy (Goal)

Goal Description:

Graduate students will be able to understand, assess, and report the results of communication research

Providing Department: Communication Studies MA / Communication Studies Certificate

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Research Literacy (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduate students will be able to understand, assess, and report the findings of communication research.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Mastery Of Written Communication (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

The first component of this rubric is Control of the Mechanics of Written Composition. The 5-point scale for measuring this degree objective will be the same throughout the department's set of objectives for MA students.

Papers (N=31) from online graduate classes reviewed by faculty reviewers for mastery of the written language.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal.

An average grade of 3 out of a possible 5 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome. This average will be taken over all student papers in each class setting and all reviewers in each setting.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

- 11)Each SACs committee member was tasked to evaluate five courses per semester. Therefore, 17 undergrad course three graduate courses were evaluated each semester, resulting in 40 courses across the academic year.
- 22)All means in the table below are based on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest rating.
- 33)I have previously sent you the pre- and post-test data for B&P and Public Speaking. I am attaching that email chain here.
- 44)Finally, I want to highlight the hard work, time, and effort [@Arrington, Michael](#), [@Horne, Dena](#), and [@Weikle, Kelly](#) put into these evaluations. They did a phenomenal job!

	Fall 2023 Graduate	Spring 2024 Graduate
<i>Writing Skill (Grammar)</i>	3.75	3.33
<i>Writing Skill (Organization)</i>	3.81	3.47

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Mastery Of Written Communication (Action)

Action Description:

As this criterion was met, future action will be to continue to monitor students' written work product for competency. Faculty will continue to mentor and help students improve their scholarly writing skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Research Literacy (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure this goal with an annual evaluation of a sample of student research literature reviews assigned in appropriate graduate courses. The second component of this rubric is Evidence of Understanding of the Applicable Theory or Theories including the Effective Connection of Theory or Theories to Communication Behavior.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal.

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome. This average will be taken over all literature reviews and all reviewers.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

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	Fall 2023 Graduate	Spring 2024 Graduate
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<i>Research Skill</i>	3.53	3.30
<i>Theory/Concept (Explanation)</i>	3.59	3.67

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Research Literacy (Action)

Action Description:

As this criterion was met, future action will be to continue to monitor students' research competency. Research Literacy and how well students can express their understanding of research can always be improved. With this in mind, faculty will continue to mentor and help students improve their research skills and put best practices into place.

Understanding And Written Communication Of Theory (Goal)

Goal Description:

Advanced students in Communication Studies must learn and be able to elucidate the theoretical concepts essential for mastery of the field.

Providing Department: Communication Studies MA / Communication Studies Certificate

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Understanding Of Theory (Learning Objective)

Learning Objective Description:

Graduate students will be able to understand the applicable theories of communication and related fields. Examples of these theories include, but are not limited to, expectancy violations theory, social penetration theory, relational dialectics theory, social judgment theory, cognitive dissonance theory, standpoint theory, and face-negotiation theory. Students will be able to explain these theories in writing examples.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Mastery Of Written Communication (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

The first component of this rubric is Control of the Mechanics of Written Composition. The 5-point scale for measuring this degree objective will be the same throughout the department's set of objectives for MA students.

Papers (N=31) from online graduate classes reviewed by faculty reviewers for mastery of the written language.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal.

An average grade of 3 out of a possible 5 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome. This average will be taken over all student papers in each class setting and all reviewers in each setting.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

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	Fall 2023 Graduate	Spring 2024 Graduate
<i>Writing Skill (Grammar)</i>	3.75	3.33
<i>Writing Skill (Organization)</i>	3.81	3.47

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Mastery Of Written Communication (Action)

Action Description:

As this criterion was met, future action will be to continue to monitor students' written work product for competency. Faculty will continue to mentor and help students improve their scholarly writing skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Understanding Of Theory (Indicator, Criterion, Findings)

Indicator Description:

We will measure this goal with an annual evaluation of a sample of student papers assigned in graduate courses. The third component of this rubric is Evidence of Understanding of the Applicable Theory or Theories. The scale for measuring this degree objective will be the same throughout the department's set of objectives for MA students.

Criterion Description:

Faculty reviewers assigned scores based on the following scale: 1= fails to meet the goal; 2=minimally meets the goal; 3=satisfactorily meets the goal; 4=meets the goal in an exemplary fashion; 5=greatly exceeds expectations in meeting the goal.

An average score of 3 out of a possible 5 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome. This average will be taken over all student papers and all reviewers.

Findings Description:

Below are the aggregated numbers for the SACs committee evaluation of written assignments across courses. A few notes that should be helpful in your interpretation:

- 1)Each SACs committee member was tasked to evaluate five courses per semester. Therefore, 17 undergrad course three graduate courses were evaluated each semester, resulting in 40 courses across the academic year.

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	Fall 2023 Graduate	Spring 2024 Graduate
<i>Theory/Concept (Explanation)</i>	3.59	3.67
<i>Theory/Concept (Application)</i>	3.5	3.43

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Understanding of Theory (Action)

Action Description:

The findings met the criterion for success on this objective, but there is always room for improvement, not only on helping students understand theory, but also in helping them more clearly apply the concepts in their writing. Faculty will share ideas and best practices aimed at enhancing students understanding of Communication Theory and they ability to communicate it in writing. Faculty will also continue to mentor and students and help them improve their understanding of theory.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

Program Growth & Development

During this past year we partnered with Enrollment Marketing and SHSU Online to run digital advertising about our graduate program. We plan to continue to use targeted digital advertising to promote our MA and Certificates.

We also plan to:

- continue to promote our program through our social media (ex. Scholars Conversations on Youtube);
- table at graduate fairs on campus and at regional and national conventions; recruit from our undergraduate classes
- work with MarComm to run geo-fenced ads to target high school teachers looking for dual credit training to promote our education focused certificate
- work to promote faculty and student scholarly collaboration
- maintain a recruiting presence at regional and national conventions
- encourage students to accept GA positions and complete GUIA training provided by The Graduate School

Move to Update Courses to the Premium Distance Learning Format

In this current cycle we were tasked with updating and improving our graduate courses. The goal is for all graduate classes to be updated by the end of the next assessment cycle. The Department Chair worked with SHSU Online to develop a rubric to evaluate the course updates and then faculty were assigned classes to update. The goal is for all graduate classes to be updated by the end of the next assessment cycle. Faculty were given the freedom to schedule the task with completing their updates, but told to have them completed by December of 2023. This will be more challenging than initially expected after losing two tenured/tenure-track faculty at the end of this assessment cycle. That said, the Department will prioritize and move forward as efficiently as possible.

Maintain a Relationship with the Medical School and Offer Instruction

Several faculty participated in providing outside lectures for the SHSU Medical School. The goal for the upcoming assessment cycle will be to attempt to develop a more formalized set of procedures to solidify this relationship.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Program Growth & Development

During this past year we were unable to have access to Enrollment Marketing (IMC) to run digital advertising during the fall. We were finally able to run paid advertising through Carnegie Marketing from late April - July. Because departments were never allowed to communicate with Carnegie directly, we are uncertain of the specific ad content, platforms, or if the ads were geo-fenced. Therefore, the graduate program's growth and recruitment were largely dependent on residual effects from previous years, presence at regional/national conventions, and direct interactions with undergraduate students.

Accomplishments:

- promoted our program through our social media (ex. Scholars Conversations on Youtube);
- tabled at graduate fairs on campus and at regional and national conventions; recruited from our undergraduate classes
- promoted faculty and student scholarly collaboration
- maintained a recruiting presence at regional and national conventions
- encouraged students to accept GA positions and complete GUIA training provided by The Graduate School

Move to Update Courses to the Premium Distance Learning Format

In this current cycle we continued to work on updating and improving our graduate courses. The goal was for all all graduate classes to be updated by the end of the next assessment cycle. Fifteen graduate classes have been updated and reviewed by SHSU Online. All updated courses received high marks and comply with the SHSU Online standards. There are 4 classes remaining that will be updated in the upcoming cycle.

Maintain a Relationship with the Medical School and Offer Instruction

Several faculty participated in providing outside guest lectures for the SHSU Medical School. The goal was to develop a more formalized set of procedures to solidify this relationship. The department has even offered to build a graduate elective for the medical students, but there are some barriers to our working together. The department is happy to work with the Medical School in any way possible.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

1. Curriculum Review & Development:

- Curriculum Review: Conduct a review of the curriculum to ensure it reflects current trends in the discipline. Add or delete courses as needed.

2. Faculty Enhancement:

- Professional Development: Encourage faculty to engage in professional development opportunities including workshops, active learning, conferences, etc.
- Research Support: Provide resources and support for faculty research, encouraging publication and participation in and travel to academic conferences.

3. Research and Innovation:

- Research Funding: Encourage faculty to seek grant funding opportunities for student and/or faculty research projects.
- Research Collaboration: Promote research collaborations within the department, college, university and with external institutions.

Department of English

Creative Writing, Publishing, and Editing MFA

Develop Skills And Knowledge Base In Creative Writing

Goal Description:

MFA graduates should be well prepared to pursue careers and vocations in creative writing, editing, and publishing.

Providing Department: Creative Writing, Publishing, and Editing MFA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

To Engage In Extensive Literary Study

Learning Objective Description:

In accordance with the Association of Writers & Writing Programs' Hallmarks of a Successful MFA Program in Creative Writing, our program will require "extensive literary study," as writers must become "expert and wide-ranging reader(s)" in order to become successful writers. Our curriculum will "balance the practice of the art of writing with the study of literature."

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Significant Coursework in Literature, Language, and Pedagogy

Indicator Description:

All students in the MFA program shall be required to earn at least 15 hours of graduate credit in literature, language, and pedagogy courses.

Criterion Description:

100% of MFA students shall average at least a B for those 15 hours of graduate credit in literature and language courses.

Findings Description:

Our students continue to perform well in these courses. For fall 23, spring 24 and summer 24, our students took 26 of these courses (78 credit hours), earning a collective a GPA of 3.96 (one student received a B in one of these courses; students received As in the rest of these courses).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Significant Coursework in Literature, Language, and Pedagogy

Action Description:

Our students are doing well in these courses, but in my first year as program director, I've found that the department offers many courses that clearly fall in this category but that are not listed as part of our degree plan. We need to review our degree plan to see if there are some of the newly added department offerings that we want to add as options on the degree plan.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

To Prepare Students for Careers in Editing and Publishing

Learning Objective Description:

In accordance with the Association of Writers & Writing Programs' Hallmarks of a Successful MFA Program in Creative Writing, our students will be prepared to seek vocational opportunities in editing and publishing.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

A Two-Course Sequence in Editing and Publishing

Indicator Description:

Students enrolled in the MFA program will be required to successfully complete a two-course sequence in editing and publishing. The first course will provide training in the theory and practice of editing and publishing, while the second course will provide hands-on experience with the Texas Review, a literary journal.

Criterion Description:

All students enrolled in the MFA program will earn at least a ‘B’ or better in both courses in the editing and publishing sequence.

Findings Description:

The Editing and Publishing course was offered in Spring 2024. One student dropped the course. All others received an A.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

A Two-Course Sequence in Editing and Publishing

Action Description:

This course has been working well, but Prof. Lantz is the only faculty member to have taught it for the last decade. We've instituted a new course rotation that will include other faculty, primarily Dr. Ko but also Drs. Kaukonen and Shinkle, in rotation for this course.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Additional Internship Opportunities with the Texas Review and Texas Review Press

Indicator Description:

In addition to the coursework required of all students, MFA students who wish to pursue a career in editing and publishing will be afforded additional training and experience through internships (in the form of graduate assistantships) with Texas Review and Texas Review Press.

Criterion Description:

At least two MFA students each semester will hold graduate assistantships with the Texas Review and/or Texas Review Press.

Findings Description:

In 2023-2024, seven MFA students held graduate assistantships at Texas Review Press.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Additional Internship Opportunities with the Texas Review and Texas Review Press

Action Description:

We don't see the need for any changes to these internships.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

To Produce Creative Work of Publishable Quality

Learning Objective Description:

Students in the MFA program will be able to produce quality literary works of publishable quality.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Opportunities to Provide Critical Feedback on Creative Work

Indicator Description:

A vital pedagogical element of the workshop is the opportunity to provide feedback on the in-process work of student peers. The opportunity to provide this feedback enables students to sharpen their own critical eye not only in regard to the work of others, but to their own work.

Criterion Description:

Each year, the students enrolled in the graduate writing workshops will provide a sufficient amount of thoughtful and engaging critiques of each other’s work, as reported on the GSAR. “Sufficient” is defined in prose workshops as at least 48 critiques (24 per workshop), and “sufficient” in poetry

workshops is defined as 60 poems or pages (30 per workshop).

Findings Description:

Students reported giving weekly feedback on peers' assignments in all workshops. Again, the structure of the nonfiction and poetry workshops in 2023-2024 didn't follow the "traditional" workshop model but instead focused on generative process and collaborative writing, but students still reported submitting an equivalent (or more) amount of peer review writing in all classes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Opportunities to Provide Critical Feedback on Creative Work

Action Description:

We think this aspect of the program is working well and doesn't require any changes at this time. While the array of courses offered provides students with a variety of workshop structures that don't always adhere to the "traditional" model, students continue to consistently give and receive substantial amounts of critical feedback in these courses.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Opportunities to Receive Critical Feedback on Creative Work

Indicator Description:

These writing-intensive workshop courses will offer students multiple opportunities for submission and revision of their work. The range of commentary from close and attentive readers will provide the authors with essential feedback, both objective and subjective, for the revision and completion of their work.

Criterion Description:

Each year, the students enrolled in the graduate writing workshops will submit a sufficient amount of writing to the workshop, as reported on the GSAR. “Sufficient” is defined in prose workshops as 4 stories, essays, or novel excerpts (2 per workshop), and “sufficient” in poetry workshops is defined as 12 poems or pages (6 per workshop).

Findings Description:

Students reported receiving feedback on their submitted assignments in all workshops. Again, the structure of the nonfiction and poetry workshops in 2023-2024 didn't follow the "traditional" workshop model but instead focused on generative process and collaborative writing, but students still reported receiving an equivalent (or more) amount of critical feedback in all classes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Opportunities to Receive Critical Feedback on Creative Work

Action Description:

We think this aspect of the program is working well and doesn't require any changes at this time. While the array of courses offered provides students with a variety of workshop structures that don't always adhere to the "traditional" model, students continue to consistently give and receive substantial amounts of critical feedback in these courses.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

To Provide Students with Strong Thesis Advising

Learning Objective Description:

In accordance with AWP Hallmarks, faculty members will “excel in providing both holistic and line-specific suggestions for revision to each student’s thesis.”

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Contact Hours with Thesis Director

Indicator Description:

Faculty members who are directing theses will meet individually on a regular basis with their students.

Criterion Description:

Thesis students will have a sufficient number of contact hours during Thesis I and Thesis II semesters with their thesis directors. “Sufficient” will be defined as 15 hours per semester (an average of one hour per week), as reported on the GSAR.

Findings Description:

Students reported maintaining weekly, one-hour meetings with their thesis advisors (average 15 hours/semester).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**Contact Hours with Thesis Director****Action Description:**

We continue to remain proud of the amount and quality of one-on-one work our thesis students receive. Some students report they are having regular scheduled meetings with their thesis directors up to a full year before they actually start thesis, and we think this level of advising is something our students value highly.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1**To Provide Students with a Variety of Lectures and Readings****Learning Objective Description:**

In addition to coursework led by our core faculty, the program will, in accordance with AWP Hallmarks, broaden “the student’s knowledge of literary techniques and aesthetics through literary lectures, craft lectures, and readings by the faculty, visiting writers, and scholars.”

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2**Program of Visiting Writers, Editors, Publishers, and Scholars****Indicator Description:**

In addition to the presence of the core MFA faculty, the program will bring to campus writers, editors, publishers, and literary scholars of national and regional renown each semester. When possible, visitors will present both their own creative work and offer a separate talk regarding an element of craft or the profession.

Criterion Description:

Students will have the opportunity to attend a sufficient number of readings and craft lectures provided by visiting writers, editors, publishers, and scholars. Sufficient will be defined as 6 per year (3 per semester).

Findings Description:

Our visiting writers for 2023-2024 included Darrel Alejandro Holnes and Mathias Svalina, and (through the National Book Awards Festival) Darcie Little Badger, Roger Reeves, and Marytza K. Rubio, all of whom gave a reading and craft talk. Additionally, because several faculty recently published books, for our spring reading slot, we featured four faculty (Dr. J. Bruce Fuller, Dr. Ginger Ko, Prof. Nick Lantz, and Dr. Katie Jean Shinkle) at a reading.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**Promise of Visiting Writers, Editors, Publishers, and Scholars****Action Description:**

We continue to offer an excellent slate of visiting authors, editors, and scholars for our students (and campus and the broader community). However, ever since the National Book Awards Festival moved from the spring to the fall, our schedule of visiting writers has shifted to be very fall-heavy. In the spring, because of conference travel and the high number of thesis and portfolio defenses, scheduling visiting writers is more challenging. We'll have to assess whether we need to think of our programing schedule differently, or if if the current system is working as is.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

To Undertake Challenging Workshops Consistently And Frequently

Learning Objective Description:

In accordance with the Association of Writers & Writing Programs' Hallmarks of a Successful MFA Program in Creative Writing, our program will offer "challenging workshops" each semester in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. These writing-intensive courses will offer students multiple opportunities for submission and revision of their work. In keeping with the fundamental nature of workshop, the students will provide and receive critical feedback not only from the professor but from fellow students. The range of commentary from close and attentive readers will provide the authors with essential feedback, both objective and subjective, for the revision and completion of their stories, poems, and essays.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Nature Of Writing Workshop Experiences

Indicator Description:

These writing-intensive courses will offer students multiple opportunities for submission and revision of their work. The range of commentary from close and attentive readers will provide the authors with essential feedback, both objective and subjective, for the revision and completion of their writing.

Criterion Description:

Each year, students in enrolled in the graduate writing workshops will submit a sufficient amount of writing to the worksop, as reported on the GSAR. "Sufficient" is defined in prose workshops as 4 stories or novel excerpts (2 per workshop), and sufficient in poetry workshops as 12 poems or pages (6 per workshop).

Findings Description:

We offered one poetry workshop and one fiction workshop in fall 2023. In spring 2024, we offered a special nonfiction workshop on collaborative writing. Both the poetry class and the nonfiction class were structured around innovative approaches to workshop and focused on process-based and collaborative writing. So these classes don't quite map onto our usual system of quantification, but in the poetry class, students participated in 11 workshop meetings and produced a chapbook/novella-length work (well more than the target 6 poems per workshop). The nonfiction students engaged in generative drafting of collaborative projects throughout the semester, which was again more than equivalent to the standard 2 pieces of writing per workshop. The fiction workshop required students to submit 3 pieces of writing.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Nature Of Writing Workshop Experiences

Action Description:

The poetry and nonfiction workshops this year used innovative structures and pedagogies. This diversity of workshop approaches is of great value to our students, and we intend to continue to offer a range of workshop types in the future. In past years' assessments, we've noted the challenge of offering courses such as the poetry workshop on a regular basis. We've agreed on planned course rotation for the next eight years, that we believe will increase the likelihood of courses such as poetry and nonfiction making enrollment when they're offered and also allowing students to better plot out their degree plans.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Workshop Offerings And Opportunities

Indicator Description:

As the workshops form the core of the MFA curriculum and since each student must take fifteen hours of workshops, it is essential that our students be able to depend upon regular workshop course offerings so as to be able to make steady progress toward the degree.

Criterion Description:

We want to be able to offer graduate-level workshops in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction each semester.

Findings Description:

This year, we offered three workshops: fiction and poetry in the fall, and nonfiction in the spring.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Workshop Offerings And Opportunities

Action Description:

In the past, we've struggled with how often to offer classes like poetry and nonfiction workshop. Starting this year, we've developed a schedule of course offerings for the next eight years. As we implement this schedule, we will monitor student enrollment and degree progress to ensure that it meets the needs of students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

To Support Our Students' Travel to Regional and National Conferences

Performance Objective Description:

Recognizing the value of regional and national conferences in our students' professionalization, we will seek to provide financial support to enable our students to travel and fully participate in these conferences.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

KPI - Conference Travel

KPI Description:

We will continue to seek opportunities to support our students' registration, travel, and hotel for conferences, workshops, and book festivals in the state, region, and nation.

Target Description:

Our target is to offer some funding for all students who are participating in professional conferences.

Results Description:

We were able to fund 5 students for travel to the Association of Writers and Writing Programs in Annual Conference this year in Kansas City.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Conference Travel

Action Description:

Ideally, we'd like to have the budget to fund all interested students in travel to at least one conference, but that's feasible, so we're committed to making sure that all interested students have an opportunity for conference travel funding to AWP at least once during their time in the program. This year, we created a more formal apparatus for how students can apply for program sponsorship, and we intend to continue and refine this process so that it feels transparent to students.

Student Recruitment

Goal Description:

We are a young program with a low ratio of applicants to admits. Our goal is increase the number of applicants so that we might become more selective in our admits.

Providing Department: Creative Writing, Publishing, and Editing MFA

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

A Diverse Student Population

Performance Objective Description:

Consistent with our mission as a regional state institution and AWP Hallmarks, we will seek to create a diverse population of qualified students of different backgrounds, social classes, and races.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Diversity of Student Population

KPI Description:

Consistent with the AWP Hallmarks, we seek a diverse student population, including but not limited to race and gender, reflecting the region that we serve.

Target Description:

MFA cohort will represent diversity of thought, background, and experience.

Results Description:

Of the fourteen enrolled MFA students this year, 4 identified as non-white, and 5 identify with the LGBTQ+ community. Of the eleven students we accepted (seven elected to enroll), five identified as non-white. Our students continue to mostly come from the east Texas region, though they do represent a wide range of ages and life stages.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Diversity of Student Population

Action Description:

We remain committed to recruiting and admitting a diverse range of students, but the primary challenge here is related to the larger challenge of recruitment. We've averaged 13 applicants per year for the past five years (as high as 19 and as low as 9), and so we are somewhat at the mercy of who applies. Drs. Shinkle and Ko are working on a project with social media consultant to help expand awareness of our program within the regions, which is very diverse. We intend to use the results of this project to improve our overall recruiting strategies.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Recruiting

KPI Description:

Through visits and advertising campaigns to English majors and minors, to undergraduate creative writing classes, in venues such as *Poets & Writers* and *The Writer's Chronicle*, and via tables at the annual *Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference and Bookfair*, we hope to recruit between five and ten students to begin the MFA at SHSU. Additionally, we expect our annual visiting writers series to contribute to our recruitment efforts.

Target Description:

Admitting five students per year in the program.

Results Description:

We offered spots to eleven students this year. Seven students accepted and are enrolled in fall 2024 courses.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Student Recruiting

Action Description:

Recruiting has been and remains a challenge for us. Part of this involves funding: programs with more attractive funding packages simply receive more applicants. So we will continue to advocate for any funding opportunities as they become available (such as the fellowships) as well as advocate for increases to the graduate assistant pay (which has not increased in decades). Beyond that, we're pivoting to refocus recruitment more regionally than nationally, and we plan to do more direct marketing to local colleges and universities to increase awareness of our program within the area. Drs. Shinkle and Ko are also engaged in a project with a social media consultant to revamp our social media presence and come up with a set of actionable strategies that we can use to improve recruitment going forward.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

To Recruit Qualified And Exceptional Students

Performance Objective Description:

We will recruit and accept into the program only those students, ideally between five and ten a year, who can reasonably be expected to complete it.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Incoming Graduate Student GPA

KPI Description:

The program will use incoming GPA scores as one indicator of likely student success. We will aim to maintain a minimum 3.00 standard for applications, with an expectation of not more than 15% allowable exemptions.

Target Description:

We will aim to maintain a minimum 3.00 standard for applications, with an expectation of not more than 15% allowable exemptions.

Results Description:

We admitted 11 applicants (7 accepted). Of the admitted students, their GPA was collective 3.58. One student had a GPA under 3.0, but on reviewing the student's application overall we felt confident that the student would be successful in the program. All other students had a GPA over 3.00.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Incoming Graduate Student GPA

Action Description:

We feel we've maintained high standards in this regard, despite our rather small applicant pool. In the one case this year where we admitted a student with a GPA under 3.0, we gave careful consideration to the student's whole application, and we believe this student will be successful in the program. Nonetheless, we remain committed to the GPA standard we've set for ourselves.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

To Provide Financial Aid to Recruit Qualified and Exceptional Students

KPI Description:

Recognizing the role that financial aid in the form of graduate assistantships serves in recruiting qualified and exceptional students into the program, we will seek to support as many of our students in this manner and to the best of our resources as we can.

Target Description:

Our target is to offer funding to all MFA students through assistantships and fellowships.

Results Description:

We continue to offer the \$10,000 per year fellowships (renewable for up to three years) for three students each year, so at any given time, nine students are benefitting from these fellowships (the fellowship students also receive a graduate assistantship). Starting fall 2024, we'll be offering one-year "recruitment scholarships" for four students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

To Provide Financial Aid to Recruit Qualified and Exceptional Students

Action Description:

We would of course like to expand our financial aid options, and will continue to advocate for that with administration, but we understand this is a slow process and not something we can directly control. Our goal remains to have all students fully funded.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

The start of the 2023–24 academic year will represent a transition point for the MFA program in creative writing, editing, and publishing, as Prof. Nick Lantz takes over as director, replacing Dr. Scott Kaukonen, who has been the director since the program's inception in 2010. Hopefully, a new director will provide some new perspective and new energy to the position.

The most significant challenge the program faces continues to be recruitment (and retention). Clearly, we haven't solved the challenge. We continue to accept and enroll a sufficient number of students, but we'd like to increase the number of applicants so that we always choose our students from the strongest pool possible. We're always sensitive to our desire to have a program whose student body reflects the full diversity of our region, which is to say Texas and the Gulf Coast. We're also aware of the challenges and obstacles that traditionally underrepresented groups face when it comes to graduate programs, MFA programs in particular. It begins with awareness--what are MFA programs, what can they do for you, what can they not do for you, what might they do for you, where are they--and preparation (what do I need to do to apply, what does it take to be admitted, what will the atmosphere be like in an MFA program), but it also includes, significantly, financial and time obstacles. Anything we can do to lower these barriers for the best students possible is not only in their interest but in our interest as a program. Going forward, we will seek tangible ways to address these concerns--from our marketing materials to our financial aid to our pedagogy.

We look forward this fall to the return of the National Book Awards Festival and to a continued lineup of diverse writers visiting our campus. We continue to believe that our students need to be exposed to a wide-range of writers, not just in terms of genre and forms and identities, but in terms of life experiences as writers. Not all our students will going to lives as teachers of creative writing (or teachers at all), and so the writers we bring to campus need to include those who have taken other paths.

As noted above, we will be reviewing our portfolio system for tweaks and revisions. We do think that the portfolio system is doing what we had intended for it to do, but it's something we should be reviewing on our regular basis to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of our students, especially with their eyes to post-MFA life.

We will be strategic, in conjunction with the chair of the Department of English, about our course offerings, and the ways in which we can maximize enrollments in each class and yet ensure that our students have the offerings they need each semester so that they might all graduate on time. We will also remain flexible for our students in terms of their individual needs and goals so that the program is always serving the best interests of our students and not some other entity.

We will also celebrate our successes. It was noted above that we've had more student publications this year than any other year. We're also seeing the alumni of our graduate creative writing program begin to publish books and land academic jobs. It's not something we've always been able to say, but moving forward we expect to be able to say it more often and more loudly, in ways that will make us a more attractive program to prospective students.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

We met our metrics for the previous year's PCI, but we've been informed that many of our objects do not meet the required criteria for program assessment, so we will be addressing those issues in the upcoming cycle by realigning our objectives with our portfolio process to collect better data that more directly measure our objectives.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

Beginning in fall 2023, we switched program directors for the first time in the program's history, and we're using this as an opportunity to review not just our curriculum but also our internal program processes and structures, from how we schedule meetings, assign tasks, select students for competitive opportunities, manage the flow of thesis and portfolio paper work, conduct advising, and so on. Many of these factors are not explicitly accounted for or in our assessment plan, but as we endeavor to make the program run smoother, we'll also improve in our target areas. For example, streamlining and clarifying logistical processes around thesis and portfolio work will help faculty be more effective advisors in their weekly meetings with students.

We're very proud of the caliber and diversity of visiting authors we bring to campus (some in partnership with the National Book Awards Festival), but we may need to look at the scheduling of these author visits. In the past, the MFA program brought out most visiting writers in the fall, and the NBAF was in the spring. Now that the NBAF has moved to the fall, most of our visiting writers tend to appear in that semester. In the spring, with conference travel and the high number of MFA student defenses (we had 16 defenses this spring), as well as the often high number of campus visits for departmental job candidates, it makes scheduling of author visits in the spring difficult. So we will have to examine whether we are satisfied with having a more full fall schedule, with fewer events in the spring, or if there is alternative programming we can offer in the spring, or if we'd like to pursue some other course of action.

Recruiting continues to be our biggest challenge. As mentioned above, Drs. Shinkle and Ko are engaged in a project to work with a social media consultant to generate strategies for better reaching our target demographics. We're pivoting to focus more on recruiting from the region, with less focus on on-of-state students. This strategy reflects the demographics of the applicants we already receive, but our region is also very diverse, with only a handful of MFA programs in a very large state, and we're confident that if we can raise awareness of our program among those populations, we'll see an increase in our applications. Of course, part of making the argument to prospective students to pursue a degree in creative writing is practical and financial. This is especially true for prospective students who are first-generation, come from marginalized backgrounds or are (for any reason) keenly conscious of their finances. The more comprehensive and better funding we can offer—and if we can successfully communicate the existence of this funding—to prospective students, the more we increase the likelihood that those prospective students will see pursuing an MFA with us as a viable option for their lives. We desperately need more funding lines, and we need the graduate student stipend to increase substantially (it hasn't seen an increase in decades), but in the meantime, we will continue to explore new ways to communicate the opportunities we do have to prospective students.

We've begun reviewing our portfolio processes and identified several pain points, both in students understanding of the content of certain portfolio elements, but also in the scheduling and other logistical processes of the portfolio. We plan this year to review and submit changes to these processes for next years catalog.

We've implemented an eight-year course schedule for our program classes, and we will monitor enrollments and student degree plan progress to ensure that this schedule is meeting student needs while also ensuring that these classes make enrollment whenever they are offered. We're also implementing some changes in how we do pre-registration advising with students to help them better plan their schedule of classes. We'll monitor these new process and adjust as necessary, but it may take a few years before we have a full understanding of how well they've worked.

English BA

Literature And Literary Theory (4000-Level)

Goal Description:

Students majoring in English will gain an appreciation of specific critical approaches and methodologies in studying literature and literary theory. Students will be able to synthesize this information in order to write effective critical analysis of literary pieces.

Providing Department: English BA

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Competency in Research

Learning Objective Description:

Research skills are key component of English majors and are directly tied to reading and writing. Essays written to analyze and/or apply literary texts suggest the depth and quality of the students' research, as well as their understanding of the assignment. Thus, during the spring 2024 semester, all 4000 level instructors will administer a new departmental rubric that assesses competency in Research.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Research Skills

Indicator Description:

English majors enrolled in 4000 level courses will receive assessment for research ability using the departmental rubric.

Criterion Description:

At least 80% of English majors enrolled in 4000 level courses will receive a satisfactory score on the departmental rubric.

Findings Description:

The department has implemented a rubric to be used for all 4000 level courses. It was piloted in the assessment year, and after revisions the department will now begin full implementation for the 2024-25 cycle.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Research Skills

Action Description:

The rubric for the 4000 level English courses will be revised to better represent more specifically the learning objectives assigned. The previous rubric did not measure research skills or critical analysis. Capstone projects to replace writing assessment have not been discussed in a pointed manner.

The Department of English is developing a rubric to assess learning objectives agreed on by the faculty and a process that will be able to be implemented in classes that are required of all of our majors. These processes and rubrics will be completed by November 1, 2024, to be implemented no later than the Spring semester 2025. Rubrics and processes have been developed and are in the process of being workshopped by the English Department faculty. After this, the rubrics and processes will be approved and implemented.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Reading Literature Critically And Writing About It Analytically

Learning Objective Description:

Students will be able to use various approaches and methodologies to analyze literary texts and demonstrate the ability to interpret texts by communicating their understanding of those texts in analytic essays. Students will have an opportunity to write analytical and critical discussions of literature.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Assessment Of Writing

Indicator Description:

Reading and writing are part and parcel of each other. Essays written to analyze and/or apply literary texts suggest the depth and quality of the students' reading, as well as their understanding of the assignment. Thus, during the spring 2024 semester, all 4000 level instructors will administer a new departmental rubric that assesses competency in reading and writing.

Criterion Description:

80% of English seniors in 4000-level writing-enhanced classes will meet the departmental criteria for academic writing that reflects critical thinking and good editing.

Findings Description:

The department has implemented a rubric to be used for all 4000 level courses. It was piloted in the assessment year, and the department will now begin full implementation for the 2024-25 cycle

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Assessment of Writing

Action Description:

New rubrics should be created for the sophomore level and above that reflect departmental learning objectives in writing skills. Using sample rubrics from writing programs, we will create accessible rubrics that better inform the department faculty of student success as well as their needs in improving their writing skills.

The results of the English 4000 level rubric were inconclusive as to research writing skills. The rubric will be revised and implemented for the 2024-25 assessment cycle.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

- 1) Continue to discuss capstone to replace some of the less successful assessments.
- 2) Continue to revise and update curriculum.
- 3) Work on recruitment strategies and marketing material.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Update to previous PCI:

1. The rubric for the 4000 level English courses will be revised to better represent more specifically the learning objectives assigned. The previous rubric did not measure research skills or critical analysis. Capstone projects to replace writing assessment have not been discussed in a pointed manner.
2. Rubrics for freshmen, sophomore, and junior writing enhanced classes will be created with input from faculty.
3. Changes to the curriculum are currently being revised and updated to better serve our student body.

4. Recruitment strategies and marketing will be overhauled in order to increase visibility of the English department, its programs, and its specialized offerings to students. This is to include social media platforms.

Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

Undergraduate Research: Emphasis on undergraduate research will be a component of all sophomore and above courses in the English department.

Program Assessments: The Department of English is developing a rubric(s) to assess learning objectives agreed on by the faculty and a process that will be able to be implemented in classes that are required of all of our majors. These processes and rubrics will be completed by November 1, 2024, to be implemented no later than the Spring semester 2025. Rubrics and processes have been developed and are in the process of being workshopped by the English Department faculty. After this, the rubrics and processes will be approved and implemented.

Program Curriculum: In an ongoing effort to adapt to contemporary student needs, faculty will look closely at the BA offerings in the next year to gauge the quality and effectiveness of course offerings.

English MA

Communication With Students

Goal Description:

The MA Director utilizes various modes of communication to ensure that students are on track in the program.

Providing Department: English MA

Progress: Ongoing

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Advising

Performance Objective Description:

Instituting an advising program so that each student must first be advised by the MA Director in order to register for classes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Advising

KPI Description:

Each MA student was advised before registering for classes. In order to be advised, students must submit a completed advising form upon which they list the courses that they have taken. The goal of this process is that the student begins to take ownership of their degree without **solely** relying upon the MA Director, Department Administration, the Chair of the Department and/or Degree works.

Each MA student was advised for the fall 2023 , spring 2024, and summer 2024 semesters.

Target Description:

All MA students have done pre-registration advising with the MA Director for the spring 23 semester.

Results Description:

Each MA student was advised before registering for classes. In order to be advised, students must submit a completed advising form upon which they list the courses that they have taken. The goal of this process is that the student begins to take ownership of their degree without **solely** relying upon the MA Director, Department Administration, the Chair of the Department and/or Degree works.

19 MA students have been advised for the spring 24 semester and .

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Advising

Action Description:

As students are admitted to the program, they are advised by the MA director. All students currently enrolled are advised by the director. The MA director plans to hold weekly on-campus office hours as well as being available via Zoom to advise MA students about classes, the exam, the research project, and thesis.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Writing Remediation

KPI Description:

The MA Director meets with graduate student who did not pass the assessment exam in order to prepare them to write better to satisfy English disciplinary graduate writing requirements.

Target Description:

The MA Director meets with graduate student who did not pass the assessment exam in order to prepare them to write better to satisfy English disciplinary graduate writing requirements.

Results Description:

For the 23-24 AY four students took the exam. One student failed the exam. A remediation plan has been developed and put in place with the student.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**Student Writing Remediation****Action Description:**

One student who took the MA assessment exam, which was scored by 3 faculty members, failed the exam. These scores were reported on August 25. A remediation plan for the student has been developed by the MA director and discussed with the student. Four students took the exam during the 23-24 AY, so we had a 75% pass rate.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1**Maintenance of English MA organization in Blackboard****Performance Objective Description:**

The English MA Director will maintain the Blackboard organization content to enhance communication with faculty and students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2**Maintenance of English MA organization in Blackboard****KPI Description:**

The MA Director created an organization in Blackboard that includes links to departmental (i.e., the MA handbook), college, SHSU Graduate School, and professional organization (i.e., the Modern Language Association) items. The MA Director will update the organization with announcements and information frequently. The MA Director also monitors, by adding or deleting, members of the organization.

Target Description:

The target for success of the English MA Blackboard organization is that it serves as a virtual resource where MA students and faculty can obtain information about the program. There are links to the SHSU Graduate School resources, English MA Advising, thesis, assessment exam, announcement of upcoming conferences and the like.

Results Description:

Updates that reflect current and future course offerings, announcements, and other revisions have been made to the English MA Blackboard organization for the fall 23 semester.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**Blackboard Organization****Action Description:**

The English MA Blackboard site will be updated for the fall 24 semester. The MA Director will better communicate with faculty and students about the materials available in the Blackboard organization, as well as collaborate with SHSU Online to track usage to determine the usefulness of the organization.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1**Social Media****Performance Objective Description:**

The English MA program will create a Facebook page to disseminate information about the program to prospective and current students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Facebook Page Creation

KPI Description:

In order to disseminate information about the MA program, the MA Director is creating and administering the program's Facebook page.

Target Description:

The creation of a Facebook page, and other social media initiatives are currently on hold until the necessary resources become available.

Results Description:

It has been decided after discussion with MA students that a Facebook page may not be the best way to communicate with students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Social Media

Action Description:

Plans are underway to create an Instagram account. The English MA program has been promised 5 hours of a graduate assistant's time per week for fall 2024. One of the duties assigned to this person will be creating and maintaining a social media presence for the MA.

Critical Thinking, Research, and Writing in Literary Studies

Goal Description:

The English MA program at Sam Houston State University has three defined goals, all of which share the common aim of preparing graduates as scholars, teachers, professional writers and researchers, and advocates for the Humanities. While the number of graduates who have entered PhD programs or taken teaching positions in area high schools or at two- and four-year colleges is an objective measure of our success in accomplishing this goal, not all of our students pursue further graduate degrees or secondary/post-secondary teaching. With that in mind, the MA faculty has determined three measurable learning objectives that apply uniformly to all MA students in English from Sam Houston State University:

(1) Demonstrate the ability to think theoretically and critically about language and literature, including the ability to apply research methods and critical theories reflective of the current state of scholarship.

To think theoretically and critically about language and literature entails the ability to analyze the composition of literary and non-literary texts, to identify and evaluate literary arguments and cultural ideologies, to situate literary texts within their literary, cultural, and intellectual histories, and to assess and weigh the merits of contending critical readings of primary texts as well as the underpinning methodologies of those critical readings (commonly referred to as "literary theory"), and to identify and articulate innovative and/or original directions in/for current scholarly discussions. It also entails the ability to conduct research in the field, identifying appropriate research resources and scholarship relevant to the project at hand.

(2) Demonstrate the ability to write cogently about language and literature, with an awareness of interdisciplinary connections.

To write cogently about language and literature entails the ability to think critically about texts (their composition, their historical context in which they were produced, and their legacies), to conduct focused research that investigates both primary and secondary sources pertinent and current to the project at hand, to organize, arrange, and weigh critical commentaries, to evaluate and select the most effective scholarly genre of expression for the project at hand (i.e. seminar or conference paper, critical essay, conference poster, book chapter), to present quotations and citations of both primary and secondary sources, including bibliographies, in a manner that is both scholarly and in accordance to professional publication formats, and to articulate and defend scholarly theses in a manner that defines (implicitly or explicitly) what characterizes 'literary studies' in relation to other disciplines.

(3) Demonstrate effective professional practices in research, analysis, and communication.

The demonstration of effective professional practices in research, analysis, and communication entails the ability to define, explore, and conduct sustained research including database and archival investigations; an understanding of, and the ability to produce, conventional and formal writing styles (including informal professional communications such as emails and blog posts, and formal styles such as academic book reviews and journal articles); the ability to format documents in accordance with specified publication formats (MLA format, for example), and the ability to discuss the etiquette of academic/professional presentations that promotes scholarship and academic community, professionalism, and responsible citizenship.

Because all three of these objectives are interdependent, all three are measured by the evaluation of research papers produced in graduate courses, and by graduate examinations.

The goals of the English MA program are aligned with the University’s mission of providing high quality education, scholarship, and service to qualified students for the benefit of regional, state, national, and international constituencies. Additionally, they are in exact alignment with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences mission to provide an understanding of "human beings in their diversity as expressed in their literatures, histories, ideas, values, oral and written expressions, and behavior. By promoting analytic, interpretive, interpersonal, and communication skills, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences facilitates personal growth, competent professionalism, and responsible citizenship."

Providing Department: English MA

Progress: Ongoing

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Assessment Exam Books and Diversity

Learning Objective Description:

In order to facilitate student engagement with texts that represent experiences from a variety of different cultures, all students will encounter diverse texts on the yearly list of ten assessment books. The list of assessment texts changes every year.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Diversity in MA Assessement Texts

Indicator Description:

The texts provided to students for the MA assessment will include works by BIPOC writers to ensure that students are required to read works by writers from outside the Anglo-American tradition and will study works in world Englishes.

Criterion Description:

At least 40% of the texts will be by BIPOC writers and at least 10% of the texts will represent a writer of world English.

Findings Description:

Of the ten texts for the 23-24 AY, seven are by BIPOC authors and two of the texts are by African authors, representing world Englishes.

Attached Files

 [2023-24 Assessment Texts.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

MA Assessment Exam

Action Description:

A committee has been appointed to discuss the entire MA assessment exam structure and whether a different measure needs to be developed to demonstrate student learning outcomes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstration of Critical Abilities: Graduate Examinations

Learning Objective Description:

English graduate students will demonstrate their abilities as independent critical thinkers, researchers, and writers capable of employing sophisticated skills in written analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of knowledge and of using a professional idiom in making written arguments. The program's success in achieving this objective will be measured by student pass rate of graduate examinations.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Graduate Examination Pass Rate as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities

Indicator Description:

A passing score on a Graduate Examination is a strong indicator that a student in English has acquired the critical skills appropriate to a graduate-level education in English, and is well-prepared for future professional endeavors. Working closely with faculty, students begin preparing for the Graduate Exams in their first semester, identifying areas of emphasis, which they will diversely explore during their course of study. They will be examined on these areas by three professors after completing 18 credit hours of study, and before the completion of 36 credit hours

Criterion Description:

At least 90% of examination essays will pass (with a grade of pass or high pass).

An examination grading rubric and sample pass, fail, and high pass essays are attached.

Attached Files

 [MAAssessmentExamAssessmentRubric2024.docx](#)

 [Successful MA assessment exam 2024](#)

Findings Description:

Our current MA assessment exam is based on ten texts which are given to students the first semester they are an MA student. For the 2023-2024 AY the exam has two dates of administration, May and August. One student chose to take the May exam and successfully passed it. Three other students will be taking the exam the second weekend of August. One student did not pass the exam during the August

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Graduate Examination Pass Rate as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities

Action Description:

The MA committee during the 23-24 AY discussed the need to reexamine our assessment exam. This will be a major focus of the program during the 24-25 AY. Four students took the exam during the 23-24 AY and 3 successfully passed it.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstration of Critical Abilities: Research Papers

Learning Objective Description:

English graduate students will demonstrate their abilities as independent critical thinkers, researchers, and writers capable of employing sophisticated skills in written analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of knowledge and of using a professional idiom in making written arguments. The program's success in achieving this objective will be measured by a holistic assessment of research papers written to complete graduate courses.

Performance in Class Writing as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities

Indicator Description:

The ability of students to write according to accepted professional standards is a direct indicator of the MA in English program's success in producing graduates who have acquired appropriate critical thinking, researching, and writing skills and are prepared for future professional endeavors. To that end, a significant amount of student writing is required in English graduate coursework.

To assess the effectiveness of class writing assignments in developing students' ability to make sophisticated arguments about literature, language, and writing disciplines in a critical idiom appropriate to professional standards, the faculty undertake an annual holistic review of representative graduate student writing produced during the reporting period.

Professors in graduate classes submit a term paper from every third student on their class rosters; although the number of samples is smaller or larger according to the number of courses taught in a given semester, the sampling represents a broad cross-section of students because it is random. One of the problems with representation, however, is that different sorts of graduate courses require different kinds of assignments. To help with the assessment, then, professors are required to submit the assignments; writing is evaluated not only by the standards that govern the profession but also by its success in fulfilling specific assignments.

Criterion Description:

At least 92% of representative graduate essays evaluated during the holistic assessment will be scored as acceptable or excellent (a combined score of 5 or higher on the scale described below). A rubric for evaluating graduate student writing is attached. Assessment Process: 1. To assure that the assessment reviews a representative sampling of writing, graduate professors in both long terms are asked to submit term papers or other significant writing from every third student listed on their class rosters. 2. Two primary readers from among the graduate English faculty independently read and score each essay under review; in the case of an unreliable result, the essay is referred to a secondary reader, who reads the essay independently, without any knowledge of the previous results (see number 5, below) 3. Each primary reader scores each essay on a 4-point scale, with a score of 4 the highest possible. The two primary scores are added to yield a total, with the final scores ranging from 8 (highest possible) to 2 (lowest possible). A combined score of 5 or higher is passing. A score of 7 or 8 indicates an excellent essay; a score of 5 or 6 indicates an acceptable essay; a score of 4 or less indicates an unacceptable essay. 4. Reliability of the two scores is assumed when both scores from the primary readers are congruent, that is, when they are within 1 point of each other. For example, a score of 6 that would be seen as reliable would mean that both readers marked the essay as a 3. A reliable score of 5 would mean that one reader assessed the essay as a 3 while the other reader assessed it as a 2. 5. Should the primary scores for an essay not be reliable—for example, a 4 and a 1, a 3 and a 1, a 4 and a 2—the essay is referred to a secondary reader. If that reader agrees with the higher score, the essay is certified as acceptable or excellent; if the secondary reader agrees with the lower score, the essay is certified as unacceptable; if the secondary reader's score falls in the middle of two extremes, the average of the three scores determines the outcome.

Attached Files

 [Holistic Grading Rubric](#)

Findings Description:

Due to the change in MA directors and the incoming director's lack of access to the assessment plan, no papers were collected for independent review. Students have been successfully making high grades in their English classes which can be seen as an indication of writing success.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Performance in Class Writing as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities

Action Description:

The MA committee will discuss the best way to judge students' writing abilities during the 24-25 AY and create a plan for implementation.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Increase Diversity of Research

Learning Objective Description:

Demonstrate the critical thinking, research, and writing includes research by BIPOC scholars. Inclusion of methods for diverse research in the English MA Blackboard organization.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Diversity in MA Assesement Texts

Indicator Description:

The texts provided to students for the MA assessment will include works by BIPOC writers to ensure that students are required to read works by writers from outside the Anglo-American tradition and will study works in world Englishes.

Criterion Description:

At least 40% of the texts will be by BIPOC writers and at least 10% of the texts will represent a writer of world English.

Findings Description:

Of the ten texts for the 23-24 AY, seven are by BIPOC authors and two of the texts are by African authors, representing world Englishes.

Attached Files

 [2023-24 Assessment Texts.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

MA Assessment Exam

Action Description:

A committee has been appointed to discuss the entire MA assessment exam structure and whether a different measure needs to be developed to demonstrate student learning outcomes.

Increase Diversity and Inclusion

Goal Description:

The English MA program will engage in initiatives that increase the diversity of the students and faculty as well as content studied.

Providing Department: English MA

Progress: On Hold

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Assessment Exam Books and Diversity

Learning Objective Description:

In order to facilitate student engagement with texts that represent experiences from a variety of different cultures, all students will encounter diverse texts on the yearly list of ten assessment books. The list of assessment texts changes every year.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Diversity in MA Assesement Texts

Indicator Description:

The texts provided to students for the MA assessment will include works by BIPOC writers to ensure that students are required to read works by writers from outside the Anglo-American tradition and will study works in world Englishes.

Criterion Description:

At least 40% of the texts will be by BIPOC writers and at least 10% of the texts will represent a writer of world English.

Findings Description:

Of the ten texts for the 23-24 AY, seven are by BIPOC authors and two of the texts are by African authors, representing world Englishes.

Attached Files

 [2023-24 Assessment Texts.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

MA Assessment Exam

Action Description:

A committee has been appointed to discuss the entire MA assessment exam structure and whether a different measure needs to be developed to demonstrate student learning outcomes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Increase Diversity of Research

Learning Objective Description:

Demonstrate the critical thinking, research, and writing includes research by BIPOC scholars. Inclusion of methods for diverse research in the English MA Blackboard organization.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Diversity in MA Assesement Texts

Indicator Description:

The texts provided to students for the MA assessment will include works by BIPOC writers to ensure that students are required to read works by writers from outside the Anglo-American tradition and will study works in world Englishes.

Criterion Description:

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Findings Description:

Of the ten texts for the 23-24 AY, seven are by BIPOC authors and two of the texts are by African authors, representing world Englishes.

Attached Files

 [2023-24 Assessment Texts.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

MA Assessment Exam

Action Description:

A committee has been appointed to discuss the entire MA assessment exam structure and whether a different measure needs to be developed to demonstrate student learning outcomes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Creating a Diverse Student Population

Performance Objective Description:

Consistent with the institutional mission of diversity and inclusion, the English MA program will seek to create a population of diverse students from a variety of different cultural backgrounds.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

International Applicants and Diversity

Performance Objective Description:

As part of the efforts to diversify the student population, the English MA program will create a plan to address increased interest in the program from international applicants.

We have had two international students accepted into the program. The first international student is starting the program in fall '22. The other international student has deferred admission until spring '23.

Our first international student from Bangladesh completed her first year in the program, and passed the assessment exam in May 2023. Our other admitted international student from Nigeria had problems obtaining a student visa and did not enter the program.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Students will demonstrate familiarity with BIPOC authors and writers of world Englishes

Performance Objective Description:

Student will demonstrate familiarity with BIPOC authors and writers of world Englishes by discussing these writers on the MA assessment exam.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Diversity of texts for MA assessment

KPI Description:

When taking the MA assessment exam, the books the student writes about on the assessment exam will be recorded by the MA director before the exams are distributed for scoring.

Target Description:

Half of the books written about by the students on the MA assessment exam will be by BIPOC authors. At least one book will be by a writer of world Englishes.

Results Description:

Four students took the assessment exam in 23-24 AY. For three students 100% of the books they wrote about were by BIPOC writers. For one student, 80% of the books written about were by BIPOC writers. All of the students wrote about one writer of world English and two wrote about two writers of world English

Attached Files

 [Assessment exam 2023-2024.docx](#)

New Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

The English MA program will continue to offer online courses to meet the needs of graduate certificate students who would like to go on to the English MA.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

The English MA program in 23-24 offered the required courses of 5301 and 5302 as synchronous online courses with successful enrollment and completion rates. Five online courses applicable to the English MA were offered in fall 2023, seven online courses were offered in spring 2024, and four online course were offered in summer 24. One course in the summer had so many students enrolled that it had to be broken into two separate sections.

Online course offerings will be a vital part of the MA program moving forward.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The MA program is under new leadership. Plans have been made to appoint a committee to look at our MA assessment exam and make recommendations about ways to improve it. The MA committee will also examine the writing component of the assessment plan and evaluate ways to effectively implement it.

The MA director has met with the new CHSS Marketing and Communication Director to discuss ways to publicize the program, and a graduate assistant has been assigned to work with the MA director for 5 hours per week in the fall.

Technical Communication MA

Develop and align program strategy

Goal Description:

The Technical Communication program will develop innovative mission, purpose, vision statements that establish a unified organizational strategy. This strategy will be aligned across the various Technical Communication programs to project a single brand image.

Providing Department: Technical Communication MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Develop and implement program strategy

Performance Objective Description:

Program faculty will brainstorm and develop a singular, cohesive program strategy and brand that aligns with SHSU's strategic plan.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Develop program strategy statements and align program with new strategy

KPI Description:

Faculty will brainstorm and produce the following program strategy statements:

- Mission statement
- Values statement
- Vision statement
- Program objectives

Processes by which this development will occur include the following:

- Director will create shared document
- Faculty will discuss general ideas for strategy during program meetings
- Director will draft initial statements
- Faculty will revise, edit, and comment on shared document
- Faculty will finalize statements during program meeting

Program will align all program elements with program strategy by doing the following:

- Update website content
- Update social media content
- Update marketing copy
- Update course syllabi

Target Description:

Benchmarks for success in this objective include the following:

- Comprehensive program strategy document with mission, vision, and value statements, as well as objectives
- Updated website content with program strategy statements
- Updated social media content reflecting program strategy
- Updated marketing copy reflecting program strategy
- Updated course syllabi with syllabus statement about program

Results Description:

We made progress towards this goal by producing a rough draft of a comprehensive program strategy document with mission, vision, and value statements, as well as objectives, though the document is not complete and not ready to be shared. We also updated some program social media to reflect this strategy (LinkedIn).

We did not update website content, marketing copy, or course syllabi to reflect these changes, though.

Our program is transitioning to a new interim program director and is also hiring two new faculty to replace faculty who are leaving in the fall. These changes have slowed work on some of these items, though we will continue to work towards developing these documents and materials to align with our program strategy.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Program Strategy

Action Description:

There has been a change of directors, and as such no actions have been assessed

Develop skills, competencies, and POVs

Goal Description:

Students will develop specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professional technical communicators.

Providing Department: Technical Communication MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrate essential knowledge and skills of technical communication

Learning Objective Description:

Students will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of the guiding theories of technical communication:

- Rhetorical awareness
- User centeredness

Students will be able to demonstrate essential skills of technical communicators:

- Design principles
- Clarity of writing

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Assess student knowledge and skills

Indicator Description:

At the end of the graduate program, students will curate representative works from across their graduate studies to produce an ePortfolio, write a Critical Review essay, and present their portfolio to colleagues and faculty. These products will satisfy the academic requirements for the MA in Technical Communication and demonstrate the students' abilities to potential employers. Students will present their portfolios to a committee of faculty from the program who will assess them according to the attached heuristic form.

Attached Files

 [TCOM Portfolio Report Updated 2023.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

80% of students will score 80% or better. To establish this standard, the graduate faculty consulted other programs' plans and discussed desired outcomes. Because graduate students are required to maintain a B (or higher) average, an 80% score on the portfolio was accepted as the minimum goal; similarly, the faculty agreed that an 80% success rate among our students was the base-level representation of our meeting the needs of students and the program.

Students achieving a score of at least "Pass" on the attached heuristic form for their Overall Score represents an 80%.

Attached Files

 [TCOM Portfolio Report Updated 2023.pdf](#)

Findings Description:

Over the past academic year, we had three graduate students complete their ePortfolios in Technical Communication (3 in Fall 2023 and none in Spring 2024). All three students received scores of at least Pass. This means we exceeded our goal of 80% of students achieving a score of at least "Pass" on the above attached heuristic form for their Overall Score, with 100% of students doing so.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Assess student knowledge and skills

Action Description:

There has been a change of directors, and as such no actions have been assessed

Recruit new students

Goal Description:

The program will make efforts to recruit an adequate number of students to grow the MA program. Program personnel will market the program through various approaches.

Providing Department: Technical Communication MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Execute a recruiting strategy

Performance Objective Description:

Faculty will recruit students into the program:

- Identify students with strengths in communication, writing, and research and approach them with information about the MA program
- Present marketing materials about the program in all upper-level technical communication classes, as well as ENGL 3330
- Post consistently to social media account on LinkedIn

We will identify marketing opportunities and create necessary supporting materials. Initiatives will include:

- Participate in Saturday@Sam beginning in Fall 2023
- Promote the MA on bulletin boards and digital signage across campus
- Plan and host program-sponsored event during 2023-24 academic year
- Table at least once per semester at graduate events
- Exhibit at STC Summit 2024

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Market program in relevant venues

KPI Description:

Program personnel will identify marketing opportunities and create necessary supporting materials. Initiatives will include:

- Continue to participate in Saturday@Sam
- Promote the MA on bulletin boards and digital signage across campus
- Plan and host program-sponsored events during the academic year
- Table at least once per semester at graduate events
- Exhibit at STC Summit 2024

Processes by which this recruiting effort will happen include the following:

- Each faculty member will be placed in rotation to present at Saturday@Sam using program-created materials
- Signage will be updated in the Evans Complex and CHSS
- Faculty will focus on planning events demonstrates value of degree
- Tabling events will be identified and target, and each faculty member will be placed in rotation to table program using program-created materials
- Two faculty members will attend and exhibit the program at the STC Summit

Target Description:

Benchmarks for success in this effort include:

- Program will have presented at both fall and spring Saturday@Sam events
- Signage will be updated to match current program strategy
- Event about technical communication will be hosted on campus during Spring 2024
 - Will promote event on relevant campus services
- Program will have tabled at least once per semester at graduate events
- Program will have attended and exhibited at STC Summit

Our program goal is to net any positive growth across 2023-24 from 2022-23. At the end of 2022-23, our program had 14 enrolled graduate students, so our goal at the end of 2023-24 is to have 15 enrolled graduate students.

Results Description:

Our work in this area was largely successful.

We presented at both Saturday@Sam events (fall - April O'Brien; spring - Shyam Pandey and Kristin Bennett). We tabled a graduate program fair (Shyam Pandey). We distributed materials at these events and online.

Due to program leadership and faculty changes, we were unable to host a spring event for students, and we were unable to participate in the STC conference.

We have achieved our goal of 15 enrolled students as of this writing, with a couple more applications for the fall still to be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Marketing

Action Description:

There has been a change in directors and information is not available

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Recruit new students

KPI Description:

Faculty will recruit students into the program:

- Identify students with strengths in communication, writing, and research and approach them with information about the MA program
- Present marketing materials about the program in all upper-level technical communication classes, as well as ENGL 3330
- Post consistently to social media account on LinkedIn

Processes by which this recruiting effort will happen include the following:

- Each faculty member identifying at least one student per semester to contact about the MA program and reporting back results
- Graduate director will meet with all upper-level face-to-face classes to provide overview of MA program
- Online module will be created for online sections of upper-level courses and 3330 courses
- Brochures will be distributed to face-to-face courses
- Program will make LinkedIn posts that average one per week throughout the year

Target Description:

Benchmarks for success in this effort include:

- Faculty report identified students during faculty meetings (6 graduate faculty = 12 students per year)
- Graduate director will meet with all upper-level face-to-face classes to provide overview of MA program
- Online module will be created, distributed, and updated at least once per year
 - Work with instructional designer to distribute to all online courses
- Should distribute at least 200 brochures
- Program should make approximately 50 LinkedIn posts

Our program goal is to net any positive growth across 2023-24 from 2022-23. At the end of 2022-23, our program had 14 enrolled graduate students, so our goal at the end of 2023-24 is to have 15 enrolled graduate students.

Results Description:

Because of leadership and faculty changes in the program, we were unable to complete any of the above items, but grass-roots efforts to recruit did help us achieve our enrollment goals.

We have achieved our goal of 15 enrolled students as of this writing, with a couple more applications for the fall still to be considered.

New Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

We will target the following goals for 2023-24:

- Revise our program's graduate handbook to reflect the changes in our new courses, tracks, and faculty.
- Implement more marketing actions that involve in-person and virtual events, social media, and professional outreach.
- Develop a graduate certificate to attract more working professionals who want a new credential.
- Focus on creating a stronger sense of community for our online graduate students to prevent attrition.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

The goals for 2023-24 were not completely met.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The T-Com program will continue to address the goals set in 2023-2024 to include:

- Revise our program's graduate handbook to reflect the changes in our new courses, tracks, and faculty.
- Implement more marketing actions that involve in-person and virtual events, social media, and professional outreach.
- Develop a graduate certificate to attract more working professionals who want a new credential.
- Focus on creating a stronger sense of community for our online graduate students to prevent attrition.

Department of History

History BA/BS

Goal: Enhancing Alumni Relations and Outreach

Goal Description:

The Department of History will seek to demonstrate its commitment to community engagement and lifelong learning by formalizing outreach to alumni.

Providing Department: History BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Performance Objective: Enhancing Alumni Relations and Outreach

Performance Objective Description:

The Department of History will aim to track the career outcomes and professional successes of its recent alumni by developing and administering an alumni survey. This survey shall assist the unit in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the program, and shall aid departmental leadership in better understanding the demographics of our majors and minors.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

KPI #1: Enhancing Alumni Relations and Outreach

KPI Description:

The Department shall seek to enhance its communications with recent alumni, in an effort to (1) showcase its scholarly profile and (2) build connections with community stakeholders who might supply internships, career opportunities, or professional connections for current students.

Target Description:

The Department shall consider it a success if it develops, publishes, and distributes among its recent alumni an e-newsletter.

Results Description:

The department is in the process of appointing a newsletter committee to ensure the distribution of both print and digital newsletters. This newsletter will include crucial information about the developmental programs, notable achievements of both faculty and students, and alumni news. The e-newsletter version will be distributed to recent alumni.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Enhancing Alumni Relations and Outreach Action Item

Action Description:

The Department of History will aim to track the career outcomes and professional successes of its recent alumni by developing and administering an alumni survey. This survey shall assist the unit in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the program, and shall aid departmental leadership in better understanding the demographics of our majors and minors.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

KPI #2: Enhancing Alumni Relations and Outreach

KPI Description:

The Department shall, through a anonymous survey, seek to better understand the career outcomes of recent alumni.

Target Description:

The Department shall consider it a success if it (1) develops a survey to be deployed among its recent graduates; and (2) collects and analyzes data about job placement, advanced degrees, and degree outcomes.

Results Description:

In an ongoing goal and initiative to enhance alumni relations, the department is working with the Office of Alumni Relations to develop the instrument. The initiatives include collecting and analyzing data about job placements, degree outcomes, and other metrics to understand the careers and outcomes of recent alumni.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Enhancing Alumni Relations and Outreach Action Item

Action Description:

The Department of History will seek to demonstrate its commitment to community engagement and lifelong learning by formalizing outreach to alumni.

Goal: Historical Literacy

Goal Description:

The BA/BS in History at SHSU prepares students to learn about and critically analyze historical events; to weigh and interpret conflicting evidence; to assess change over time; to evaluate the complexities and contingencies of the past; and to gain an appreciation of the texture and diversity of the human experience. Students who complete the BA/BS degree should be able to make and sustain a historical argument in professional prose; to weigh the merits of an argument; and to pose good questions both about the past and their own particular moment. Students with the BA/BS degree should be prepared for graduate education in history.

Providing Department: History BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Acquisition of Historical Thinking Skills

Learning Objective Description:

Upon completion of the core curriculum courses (HIST 1301 and HIST 1302, HIST 2311 and HIST 2312), undergraduate History majors should be able to demonstrate their mastery of basic historical thinking skills by: (1) evaluating change over time; (2) establishing and/or situating events in historical context; (3) distinguishing between primary and secondary sources; and (4) describing the complexities and contingencies of the past.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator, Criterion, and Findings: Acquisition of Historical Thinking Skills




Indicator Description:

The Department of History's Undergraduate Affairs Committee shall administer pre- and post-tests to students enrolled in its core curriculum courses: HIST 1301 and HIST 1302, HIST 2311 and HIST 2312. These examinations were developed by the Department's Undergraduate Affairs Committee to measure the acquisition of historical thinking skills and student growth over the course of a semester.

Criterion Description:

The Department of History shall administer the attached pre- and post-tests to students enrolled in its core curriculum courses. These exams will be scored by members of the Undergraduate Affairs Committee. The results of the exams shall be analyzed by the committee and reported to the departmental faculty for review and discussion.

Attached Files

-  [2312%20Pre-Test.pdf](#)
-  [1301%20Pre-Test.pdf](#)
-  [1301%20Post-Test.pdf](#)
-  [1302%20Post-Test.pdf](#)
-  [2311%20Post-Test.pdf](#)
-  [2312%20Post-Test.pdf](#)
-  [1302%20Pre-Test.pdf](#)
-  [2311%20Pre-Test.pdf](#)

Findings Description:

The pre- and post-tests were not scored by the undergraduate affairs committee, and therefore the results of the exams were not analyzed. Faculty have been working with Dr. Benjamin Mitchell-Yellin in the Provost's Office to address the high DFQ rates in HIST 1301 and HIST 1302; these conversations have taken the place of pre- and post-test review and discussion in Spring and Fall 2024. The pre- and post-test will be administered in Fall 2024 for analysis by the department.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acquisition of Historical Thinking Skills Action Item

Action Description:

The Department of History will examine new pre- and post-tests for suitability for students enrolled in its core curriculum courses. These exams will be revised by members of the Undergraduate Affairs Committee. The new exams will be analyzed by the committee and reported to the departmental faculty for review and discussion.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Constructing a Historical Argument

Learning Objective Description:

Prior to graduation, students will demonstrate the ability to make and sustain a historical argument rooted in their own, original analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator, Criterion, and Findings: Constructing a Historical Argument

Indicator Description:

All undergraduate students are required to take HIST 4399: History Senior Seminar. In this capstone course, typically completed in the penultimate or final semester, students conduct historical research and produce an extensive research paper using primary and secondary sources. Once per year, the Department of History's Undergraduate Affairs Committee shall collect and evaluate a randomized sample of the writing artifacts produced across all sections of HIST 4399.

Criterion Description:

The department shall assess the thesis, evidence, organization, and mechanics of a randomized sample of writing artifacts produced in the capstone seminar course. The department will consider it a success if all writing artifacts scored by the Undergraduate Affairs Committee obtain a minimum score of "meets expectations" on the attached rubric.

Attached Files

-  [HIST 4399 Writing Artifact Evaluation Rubric.pdf](#)

Findings Description:

The undergraduate affairs committee collected but did not score a randomized sample of writing artifacts from HIST 4399. The departmental chair will work to ensure that the committee follows through and completes this work in Fall 2024, using the attached evaluation instruments.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Constructing a Historical Argument Action Item

Action Description:

The department shall assess the thesis, evidence, organization, and mechanics of a randomized sample of writing artifacts produced in the capstone seminar course. The department will consider it a success if all writing artifacts scored by the Undergraduate Affairs Committee obtain a minimum score of "meets expectations" on the department rubric.

Goal: Promoting the History Major

Goal Description:

The Department of History will continue to promote the study of history and the value of historical literacy at SHSU.

Providing Department: History BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Performance Objective: Promoting History Major

Performance Objective Description:

The Department of History will continue to increase the number of undergraduate majors and minors.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

KPI #1: Promoting the History Major

KPI Description:

The Department of History shall attempt to build community among current students and alumni and promote its programs.

Target Description:

The department shall consider it a success if it (1) develops an annual faculty newsletter; (2) hosts a student recruitment event, and (3) develops a new promotional video for its undergraduate program

Results Description:

The department is in the process of appointing a newsletter committee to ensure the distribution of both print and digital newsletters. This newsletter will include departmental programs and notable achievements from both faculty and students, as well as alumni news. In an ongoing effort to promote our vibrant undergraduate and graduate programs, the department has developed a promotional video.

Additionally, we have hosted monthly student recruitment events called "Pop Into History," which are designed to attract students interested in history programs. These events provide a platform for prospective students to connect with history faculty and learn more about our program and course offerings. This is an ongoing goal and initiative to enhance engagement and visibility of our department.

Attached Files

 [Supporting documents](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Promoting the History Major Action Item

Action Description:

The Department of History will continue to promote the study of history and the value of historical literacy at SHSU.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

KPI #2: Promoting the History Major

KPI Description:

The Department of History shall seek to exploit its unusual B.S. degree as a recruiting tool. To fully realize the recruiting potential of this degree program, the department shall seek to build a program in the history of medicine.

Target Description:

The department will consider it a success if it makes a tenure-track hire in the History of Medicine.

Results Description:

The department conducted a nationwide search for a tenure-track position in the history of medicine, culminating successfully with the appointment of Dr. Scottie Buehler. Dr. Buehler has been instrumental in developing the Medical Humanities minor, hosted by the History Department, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This new program, along with the B.S. degree, has served as a valuable recruiting tool. In Fall 2023, The Medical Humanities program awarded two student prizes and received proposals for creating short curriculum units on medical humanities topics for class use. Dr. Buehler and other faculty members are developing the core curriculum for the minor and are launching new courses such as Narrative Medicine, Feminist Bioethics, and Disability in Art. The program committee has curated a library of medical and health-related objects for classroom use and have begun planning a conference, including student panels, for fall 2025. The Medical Humanities Program has invited notable scholars in the field of medical history to present to our students and community members to broaden their understanding of the field.

Attached Files

 [Supporting documents](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Promoting the History Major Action Item

Action Description:

The Department of History will continue to increase the number of undergraduate majors and minors.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

The Department of History shall seek to better serve its undergraduate students in the upcoming academic year. First, it shall implement overdue updates to its degree plans. The new degree plans shall require a course in historical methodology, so as to better prepare students for upper-division coursework. The new degree plans shall also structure elective choices, so as to ensure geographic and chronological breadth. Students will also benefit from clearly articulated learning objectives at the 1000-, 2000-, and 3000-levels.

Second, the department shall further develop its new Public History Internship program, which launched in Summer 2023. The department shall seek to increase the number of students engaged in this program. Alongside this effort, the department will promote oral history as a tool for academic community engagement. The department shall develop a physical space where oral history interviews can be recorded.

Third, the department will continue to build intellectual community through its sponsorship of the Medical Humanities minor. With a newly-hired tenure-track professor in place to direct the program--and a NEH grant to support its development--we shall seek to recruit and retain new students while building interdisciplinary connections.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

The department was in the process of appointing a newsletter committee to ensure the distribution of both print and digital newsletters. This newsletter will include crucial information about the developmental programs, notable achievements of both faculty and students, and alumni news. The e-newsletter version will be distributed to recent alumni. Ongoing.

The department built intellectual community through its sponsorship of the Medical Humanities minor.

This program, along with the B.S. degree also served as a valuable recruiting tool. The Medical Humanities program awarded two student prizes and received proposals for creating short curriculum units on medical humanities topics for class use. Dr. Buehler and other faculty members developed the core curriculum for the minor and are launching new courses such as Narrative Medicine, Feminist Bioethics, and Disability in Art. The program committee has curated a library of medical and health-related objects for classroom use and have begun planning a conference, including student panels, for fall 2025. the program The Medical Humanities Program has [invited notable scholars in the field of medical history](#) to present to our students and community members to broaden their understanding of the field.

In an ongoing effort to promote our vibrant undergraduate and graduate programs, the department has developed a promotional video. The department hosted monthly student recruitment events called "Pop Into History," designed to attract students interested in history classes. These events provided a platform for prospective students to connect with history faculty and learn more about our program and course offerings. This is an ongoing goal and initiative to enhance engagement and visibility of our department.

In an ongoing goal and initiative to enhance alumni relations, the department has been working with the Office of Alumni Relations to develop the instrument. The initiatives included collecting and analyzing data about job placements, degree outcomes, and other metrics to understand the careers and outcomes of recent alumni.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The Department will consider it a success if it develops, publishes, and distributes among its recent alumni an e-newsletter. The Department of History shall attempt to build community among current students and alumni and promote its programs. The Department shall, through a anonymous survey, seek to better understand the career outcomes of recent alumni. The Department of History shall seek to exploit its unusual B.S. degree as a recruiting tool. To fully realize the recruiting potential of this degree program, the department shall seek to build a program in the history of medicine.

Department of Political Science

Legal Studies Minor

Interdisciplinary curriculum focused on skill development

Goal Description:

The department's Minor in Legal Studies provides alternative approaches to the study of law by exposing the undergraduate to an interdisciplinary curriculum composed of classes in the social sciences, humanities, business, and education. The minor aims to help develop graduates who possess strong thinking, analytical, writing, and research skills.

Providing Department: Legal Studies Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Understand principles of the legal and judicial system

Learning Objective Description:

Students completing the Legal Studies minor will understand the philosophy and principles that form the foundation of the legal and judicial system.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Core courses

Indicator Description:

All students in the legal studies minor must take the following core courses:

- POLS 3334 Judicial Systems
- POLS 4334 Constitutional Law I: Civil Rights and Liberties
- POLS 4335 Constitutional Law II: Government Power / State-Federal Relations

Each of these courses has an objective of introducing students to the philosophical, legal and political contexts in which constitutional questions have been addressed in the United States.

Student performance in these courses is an indicator that they have achieved this objective.

Criterion Description:

We expect that 85% or more of students will pass these courses with a grade of C or better.

Findings Description:

In Summer 2023, we offered one section of POLS 3334. Twenty-three (23) students completed the course. 99% earned a score of C or better.

In Fall 2023, we offered two sections of POLS 4334. Sixty-eight (68) students completed the course. Eighty-five percent (85%) of students earned a score of C or better.

In Spring 2024, we offered two sections of POLS 4335. Fifty-seven (57) students completed the course. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of students earned a score of C or better.

In Spring 2024, we offered one section of POLS 3334. Twenty-five (25) students completed the course. Eight-eight percent (88%) of students earned a score of C or better.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Develop more specific learning objectives for the program and a better plan for assessing them

Action Description:

In the 2024-2025 AY, the legal studies faculty within the department will work to develop a means of assessing student progress on development of thinking, analytical, writing, and research skills in Judicial Systems (POLS 3334), Constitutional Law I (POLS 4334), and Constitutional

Law II (POLS4335) -- the three required courses in the minor.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Plan to assess SLOs in POLS 3334, 4334, and POLS 4335

Performance Objective Description:

Judicial Systems (POLS 3334), Constitutional Law I (POLS 4334), and Constitutional Law II (POLS4335) are the three required courses in the minor. In 2023-2024, the legal studies faculty within the department will work to develop a means of assessing student progress on development of thinking, analytical, writing, and research skills in these courses.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

SLO assessment plan

KPI Description:

Political science faculty teaching within the legal studies minor will meet and, in conjunction with the department chair, develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes for POLS 3334, POLS 4334, and POLS 4335.

Target Description:

Success will be defined as (1) meeting to discuss assessment options for the three courses above and (2) if it is determined that a better measure of SLO is appropriate, developing that measure.

Results Description:

We were not able to make progress on this objective in AY 2023-2024. The plan is to work on this in AY 2024-2025.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

SLO assessment plan

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

Heading into the next assessment cycle (2023-2024) the Legal Studies Minor program has three major goals:

1. Develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes for the three required courses in the minor: POLS 3334, POLS 4334 and POLS 4335.
2. Keep an eye on the balance of demand for face-to-face versus online for LGST minors. In 2021-2022, we began to offer a mix of modalities for the required courses. Our plan is to watch to see if there remains an even split -- initial face-to-face and online have filled at equal rates -- or if demand starts to lean in one way or another.
3. Find new instructors who can teach in the program, particularly the required courses, in order to ease some of the pressure on current program instructors.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

We were not able to make progress on objectives 1 and 3 in 2023-2024.

We have been able to make progress on balancing course demand (#2). We utilize 100% online only attributes on the online courses in order to (1) make designated space for online-only students and (2) try to gently nudge students who are not 100% online into face-to-face sections.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

During the 2024-2025 cycle, we have two primary objectives for this program:

1. The legal studies faculty within the department will work to develop a means of assessing student progress on development of thinking, analytical, writing, and research skills in Judicial Systems (POLS 3334), Constitutional Law I (POLS 4334), and Constitutional Law II (POLS4335) -- the three required courses in the minor.

2. We will work to secure new faculty to teach in the program. Some of this could come through the 3 tenure track lines that are currently open in the department. Progress on this item is essential. The faculty in this program are limited and spend so much time teaching it makes it difficult to make progress on these items of secondary or tertiary importance (e.g., defining assessment-related objectives and indicators).

Political Science BA/BS

Improve Undergraduate Curriculum

Goal Description:

The department will work to improve its undergraduate curriculum with an eye toward (1) improving student learning outcomes and (2) improving the resilience of the program by making it easier to recruit majors.

Providing Department: Political Science BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Review undergraduate curriculum

Performance Objective Description:

The department will conduct a review of its undergraduate curriculum (BA and BS).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Review undergraduate curriculum

KPI Description:

In Fall 2023, the department will conduct a review of the undergraduate curriculum (BA and BS) with an eye toward improving course sequencing and offerings.

Target Description:

This performance objective will be achieved if the department conducts the review and develops changes that are ready to incorporate into the next cycle of catalog changes.

Results Description:

The department conducted a complete review of the BA and BS curricula early in the Fall 2023 semester. We decided to overall both degree plans, pulling more POLS courses into the major foundation for both degree plans. The new curricula were entered into the 2024 catalog.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Review undergraduate curriculum

Action Description:

The department met this objective in AY23-24. In Fall 2024, we met, discussed, and agreed upon substantive changes in our BA and BS curricula -- specifically a new "Major Foundation" that applies to each. We were able to move quickly enough to incorporate the changes into the AY24-25 catalog.

Promote Positive Undergraduate Student Outcomes

Goal Description:

The political science department aims to offer educational instruction that promotes strong critical thinking, clarity of thought, excellent communication capabilities, and sophisticated research skills.

Providing Department: Political Science BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Develop Students' Disciplinary Skills

Learning Objective Description:

Students in the major will develop their ability to analyze and present empirical data, explain key concepts of research design, and write coherent reports and research papers.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Paper Outcomes in 3379

Indicator Description:

POLS 3379 Research and Writing is a required course. Faculty members who teach the course will receive and review 5 randomly selected papers POLS 3379 courses. Faculty members will review the papers using a rubric. Papers will be scored on a scale of 1 - 5 with 5 being the highest.

Criterion Description:

We expect that 75% of the written assignments selected for committee review will receive a score of three or better.

Findings Description:

This data was not collected in AY23-24. We are currently thinking about revising this indicator and criteria in AY24-25.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Student Paper Outcomes in 3379

Action Description:

We need to revise this measurement in AY24-25. In previous years, we used 3379 because it was one of the only courses that all BA/BS students were required to take. In AY24-25, we revised the curricula with a new "Major Foundation" that applies to both the BA and BS program. Going forward, we need to think differently about how we might assess the "interdisciplinary skills" learning objective beyond collecting papers in the 3379 course.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Develop Students' Knowledge of Civic Engagement

Learning Objective Description:

Students will learn the skills and knowledge necessary to participate and engage in civic and political life at the local, state, and national levels of government.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Pre/Post Testing of POLS 2305 and POLS 2306 Students

Indicator Description:

Students enrolled in 2305 American Government and 2306 Texas Government will complete pre/post tests designed to capture information about students learning progress on matters relevant to civic and political engagement. Students in POLS 2305 will be assessed in Fall 2023. Students in POLS 2306 will be assessed in Spring 2024.

Criterion Description:

We expect to see positive differences between the pre and post tests scores.

Findings Description:

Beginning in fall 2022, a new locally developed pretest to posttest was administered within sections of POLS 2305: American Government. The instrument consisted of 10 multiple-choice questions and was administered at the beginning and at the end of the fall and spring semesters. The instrument was developed by the faculty of the Department of Political Science for use as part of their ongoing programmatic assessment as well as for Core Learning assessment. As the instrument was locally developed by faculty from the Department of Political Science, it is assumed that the instrument has content-related validity (Banta & Palomba, 2015). Additionally, as this test was embedded within the POLS 2305: American Government courses, the student scores represent authentic student work (Banta & Palomba, 2015; Kuh et al., 2015). However, as the instrument is not for a grade within the course, it represents a low-stakes assessment of student learning.

A total of 111 students took the pretest, and a total of 103 students took the posttest for all sections of POLS 2305: American Government for the fall 2023 semester; however, not all student test scores were used for analysis. To determine whether student performance increased from pretest to posttest, a dependent samples t-test was used for analysis. Student identification numbers were collected along with student scores to identify each student's score on both the pretest and posttest. A total of 28 students could be identified as taking both the pre- and posttests. All statistical analysis was therefore conducted on only those students for whom both pre- and posttest scores could be identified.

A parametric dependent samples t-test did not reveal a statistically significant difference between students' pre- to posttest scores for students enrolled in face-to-face sections of POLS 2305: American Government for the fall 2023 semester, $t(19) = -0.68$, $p = .504$. The average student score increased from 60.00% to 63.50%, for an increase of 3.50%. This equated to an average increase of 0.35 questions answered correctly from pre- to posttest.

- - -

Beginning in fall 2022, a new locally developed pretest to posttest was administered within sections of POLS 2306: Texas Government. The instrument consisted of 10 multiple-choice questions and was administered at the beginning and at the end of the fall and spring semesters. The instrument was developed by the faculty of the Department of Political Science for use as part of their ongoing programmatic assessment as well as for Core Learning assessment. As the instrument was locally developed by faculty from the Department of Political Science, it is assumed that the instrument has content-related validity (Banta & Palomba, 2015). Additionally, as this test was embedded within the POLS 2306: Texas Government courses, the student scores represent authentic student work (Banta & Palomba, 2015; Kuh et al., 2015). However, as the instrument is not for a grade within the course, it represents a low-stakes assessment of student learning.

A total of 88 students took the pretest, and a total of 31 students took the posttest for all sections of POLS 2306: Texas Government for the spring 2024 semester; however, not all student test scores were used for analysis. To determine whether student performance increased from pretest to posttest, a dependent samples t-test was used for analysis. Student identification numbers were collected along with student scores to identify each student's score on both the pretest and posttest. A total of 31 students could be identified as taking both the pre- and posttests. All statistical analysis was therefore conducted on only those students for whom both pre- and posttest scores could be identified.

A parametric dependent samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference at the $p \leq .05$ level between students' pre- to posttest scores for students enrolled in face-to-face sections of POLS 2306: Texas Government for the spring 2024 semester, $t(13) = -2.53$, $p = .025$. This difference represented a large effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.84 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 46.43% to 64.29%, for an increase of 17.86%. This equated to an average increase of 1.79 questions answered correctly from pre- to posttest.

Please see the attached reports.

Attached Files

 [POLS 2305 Fall 2023 Report.pdf](#)

 [POLS 2306 Spring 2024 Report.pdf](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Pre/Post Testing of POLS 2305 and POLS 2306 Students

Action Description:

In the coming AY, the department should continue to implement and assess its strategy for assessing SLOs in 2305 and 2306 based on plan developed and executed in the previous two cycles.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Review undergraduate curriculum

Performance Objective Description:

The department will conduct a review of its undergraduate curriculum (BA and BS).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Review undergraduate curriculum

KPI Description:

In Fall 2023, the department will conduct a review of the undergraduate curriculum (BA and BS) with an eye toward improving course sequencing and offerings.

Target Description:

This performance objective will be achieved if the department conducts the review and develops changes that are ready to incorporate into the next cycle of catalog changes.

Results Description:

The department conducted a complete review of the BA and BS curricula early in the Fall 2023 semester. We decided to overall both degree plans, pulling more POLS courses into the major foundation for both degree plans. The new curricula were entered into the 2024 catalog.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Review undergraduate curriculum

Action Description:

The department met this objective in AY23-24. In Fall 2024, we met, discussed, and agreed upon substantive changes in our BA and BS curricula -- specifically a new "Major Foundation" that applies to each. We were able to move quickly enough to incorporate the changes into the AY24-25 catalog.

Recruit more undergraduate majors

Goal Description:

The department will work to improve the number of undergraduate majors (BA or BS) in political science.

Providing Department: Political Science BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Develop a marketing and recruiting strategy

Performance Objective Description:

Department will work with Enrollment, Marketing, and Communications to develop and begin to implement a comprehensive marketing strategy for recruiting students into BA and BS programs.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Meet with EMC, develop strategy

KPI Description:

In early 2024, the department chair and recruitment committee will meet with the Enrollment Marketing and Communication office to develop a marketing strategy.

Target Description:

The target is a meeting with the Enrollment Marketing and Communication office to develop a marketing strategy.

Results Description:

The department was offered no opportunity to meet with Enrollment, Marketing, and Communication during AY 2023-2024. This appeared to be the result of major changes EMC implemented in workflow and the emphasis they were placing on a university re-branding effort. Along with the rest of the departments in CHSS, we plan to continue to press these efforts in the coming AY.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**Meet with IMC, develop strategy****Action Description:**

This was not completed in AY2023-2024, largely due to IMC putting these sorts of actions on hold throughout the university. However, during the year a new marketing coordinator for CHSS was hired. In the next AY, we will be working the new college coordinator to try to develop a marketing strategy for our undergraduate programs.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1**Review undergraduate curriculum****Performance Objective Description:**

The department will conduct a review of its undergraduate curriculum (BA and BS).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2**Review undergraduate curriculum****KPI Description:**

In Fall 2023, the department will conduct a review of the undergraduate curriculum (BA and BS) with an eye toward improving course sequencing and offerings.

Target Description:

This performance objective will be achieved if the department conducts the review and develops changes that are ready to incorporate into the next cycle of catalog changes.

Results Description:

The department conducted a complete review of the BA and BS curricula early in the Fall 2023 semester. We decided to overall both degree plans, pulling more POLS courses into the major foundation for both degree plans. The new curricula were entered into the 2024 catalog.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**Review undergraduate curriculum****Action Description:**

The department met this objective in AY23-24. In Fall 2024, we met, discussed, and agreed upon substantive changes in our BA and BS curricula -- specifically a new "Major Foundation" that applies to each. We were able to move quickly enough to incorporate the changes into the AY24-25 catalog.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item**Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):****Closing Summary**

For the 2023-2024 academic year, the department must continue to tackle the following:

1. Create new assessment metrics for POLS 3379
2. Work toward developing small-group events where students are personally invited to participate.
3. Meet with the Enrollment Marketing and Communication office to develop a marketing strategy.
4. Think about revising curriculum in the most straight-forward, efficient, and exciting (for students) ways possible. Given the time and challenges associated with creating new programs, the department

should first focus on low-hanging fruit: course titles and descriptions, changes to curriculum, etc.

The department chair will take the lead on these working with undergraduate curriculum committee and undergraduate recruitment committee as appropriate.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

During 2023-2024, our biggest progress was on the curriculum revision. Not only were we able to revisit and rethink the curriculum, we were able to get it done in a time period that allowed us to incorporate the changes (both BA and BS) in the AY24-25 catalog.

Due to IMC's hold on department and program marketing, we were not able to make progress on #3.

We decided to hold off on #1 given the move toward new curriculum which will ultimately offer us a broader set of options for assessing student learning objectives in our BA and BS programs.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

For the 2024-2025 academic year, the department must continue to tackle the following:

1. Create new assessment metrics for learning objectives, particularly in light of the move toward a more cohesive (and required) major foundation.
2. Work toward developing small-group events where students are personally invited to participate.
3. Develop a marketing strategy in conjunction with the new CHSS marketing coordinator.

The department chair will take the lead on these working with undergraduate curriculum committee and undergraduate recruitment committee as appropriate.

Public Administration and Public Policy Minor

Prepare students for careers in public and nonprofit sectors

Goal Description:

The department's Public Administration & Public Policy minor provides students a curriculum composed of POLS courses designed to prepare students who wish to pursue careers in the public and nonprofit sectors.

Providing Department: Public Administration and Public Policy Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Gain understanding of national public administration

Learning Objective Description:

Students in the Minor in Public Administration and Public Policy will gain an understanding of national public administration with emphasis on the political processes within the surrounding administrative agencies.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Core course in public administration

Indicator Description:

Students in the Minor in Public Administration and Public Policy must take POLS 3366 ("Public Administration") as a required course. This course has an objective of introducing students to the national public administration with emphasis on the political processes within the surrounding administrative agencies.

Student performance in these courses is an indicator that they have achieved this objective.

Criterion Description:

We expect that at least 85% of students enrolled in POLS 3366 during the academic year will pass with a grade of C or better.

Findings Description:

The department offered POLS 3366 in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024.

- Fall 2023 -- 11 students completed the course; 10 (91%) completed the course earning a grade of C or better
- Spring 2024 -- 25 students completed the course; 21 (84%) completed the course earning a grade of C or better

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Core Course in Public Administration

Action Description:

We need to come up with a new means of assessing SLOs with respect to the public administration side of this minor. This will likely involve better-specifying the language of the SLOs and coming up with better indicators of progress on those objectives.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Understanding of the process of public policy

Learning Objective Description:

Students in the Minor in Public Administration and Public Policy will gain an understanding of the ways in which governmental entities in the U.S. make public policy.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Core course in public policy

Indicator Description:

Students in the Minor in Public Administration and Public Policy must take POLS 3302 ("Public Policy") as a required course. This course has an objective of introducing students to the ways in which governmental entities in the U.S. make public policy.

Student performance in these courses is an indicator that they have achieved this objective.

Criterion Description:

We expect that at least 85% of students taking POLS 3302 in the current academic year will pass with a grade of C or better.

Findings Description:

The department offered POLS 3302 in Fall 2023. Thirty-five (35) students completed the course. Of these 32 (91%) earned a grade of C or better.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Core Course in Public Policy

Action Description:

We need to come up with a new means of assessing SLOs with respect to the public policy side of this minor. This will likely involve better-specifying the language of the SLOs and coming up with better indicators of progress on those objectives.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Plan to assess SLOs of minor

Performance Objective Description:

In 2023-2024, department faculty who teach within the PAPP minor will work to develop a means of assessing student learning outcomes (SLOs) within the minor.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

SLO assessment plan

KPI Description:

Political science faculty teaching within the PAPP minor will meet and, in conjunction with the department chair, develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes

Target Description:

Success will be defined as (1) meeting to discuss assessment options for the minor (2) if it is determined that a better measure of SLO is appropriate, developing that measure.

Results Description:

Not completed in AY 2023-2024. We plan to revisit and include this as a goal in AY 2024-2025.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

SLO assessment plan

Action Description:

We need to come up with a new means of assessing SLOs with respect to the minor. This will likely involve better-specifying the language of the SLOs and coming up with better indicators of progress on those objectives.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

For the coming year, the primary goal of the department with respect to this program will be a focused assessment of student learning objectives and some thinking about how to best assess these objectives. In addition, the program will explore the idea of a 15-hour certificate that will mirror the PAPP minor. This fits with the idea of "stackable credentials" and could be very marketable to firefighters, etc.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

We were not able to make progress on these objectives in 2023-2024. Now that we have a new tenure-track faculty member, this will be a priority in 2024-2025.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

For 2024-2025, the program has two goals:

1. Related to the actions already identified herein: We need to come up with a new means of assessing SLOs for this minor. This will likely involve better-specifying the language of the SLOs and coming up with better indicators of progress on those objectives.
2. The program will explore the idea of a 15-hour certificate that will mirror the PAPP minor. This fits with the idea of "stackable credentials" and could be very marketable to firefighters, etc.

The department chair will have primary responsibility for accomplishing these goals.

Department of Psychology and Philosophy

Clinical Psychology MA

G - Assessment Skills

Goal Description:

Students will acquire developmentally appropriate proficiencies in personality and intellectual/achievement assessment.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

LO - Assessment

Learning Objective Description:

Students demonstrate developmentally appropriate competencies in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of personality and intelligence tests.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF Assessment

Indicator Description:

Students demonstrate competency to administer, score, and interpret personality and educational tests for children and adults. Indicators of competency include (a) successfully completing two assessment courses (PSYC 5396, Personality Assessment; PSYC 5395, Assessment of Intelligence and Achievement), and (b) successfully passing the Assessment Capstone examination. For the Assessment Capstone examination, the students are given the beginning of an assessment report, including referral reason, background information, tests administered and the raw data resulting from those tests. The student's task is to complete the rest of the report by interpreting and reporting the test results, providing a DSM diagnosis and recommendations stemming from findings.

Using the new grading rubric (see attached), which is provided to students prior to the exam, faculty evaluate the students' performance in key clinical competencies: referral question, informed consent, assessment and diagnosis, treatment planning and implementation, ethical and multicultural considerations and case analysis. Faculty ratings on each item can range from Below Expectations (BE), Marginal (M), Meets Expectations (ME), and Exceeds Expectations (EE).

Attached Files

 [Capstone Assessment Grading Rubric.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

100% of students will pass PSYC 5396 and PSYC 5395 with a grade of B or better.

100% of students will pass the Assessment Capstone examination with a rating of Meets Expectations or better on 22/28 items with no ratings of Below Expectations, and no more than 5 ratings of Marginal.

Findings Description:

100% of students passed PSYC 5396 and PSYC 5395 with a grade of B or better.

100% of third-year/graduating students successfully passed the Assessment Capstone examination.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

A - Assessment

Action Description:

In the coming year, the Core Faculty will discuss and evaluate the timing of the Assessment Capstone. Students take the Assessment courses in their first year and take the Assessment Capstone at the end of their third year, along with the Psychotherapy Capstone. The two capstones comprise the program's Comprehensive Exam, so it is appropriate for that to be administered during the final semester of training. However, some students who do not conduct assessment during practicum may experience greater anxiety due to the gap between coursework and the capstone examination.

G - Psychotherapy Skills

Goal Description:

Students develop effective psychotherapy skills consistent with their level of training.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

LO Psychotherapy Skills

Learning Objective Description:

Students demonstrate developmentally appropriate competencies in psychotherapy and intervention skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF Psychotherapy Skills

Indicator Description:

Student competencies with respect to psychotherapy skills are assessed in (a) successful completion of three clinical Practicum courses, and (b) a capstone Psychotherapy Case examination, which requires students to present a case study of a client they treated during their Practicum II/III experience. Using the grading rubric (see attached), which is provided to students prior to the exam, two faculty evaluate the students' performance in key clinical competencies: referral question, informed consent, assessment and diagnosis, treatment planning and implementation, ethical and multicultural considerations and case analysis. Faculty ratings on each item can range from Below Expectations (BE), Marginal (M), Meets Expectations (ME), and Exceeds Expectations (EE).

Criterion Description:

100% of students will pass Practicum I, II, and III (PSYC 6391, 6392, 6393) with satisfactory evaluations from instructors and supervisors.

100% of students will pass the Psychotherapy Case Study Capstone with combined faculty ratings of "Meets Expectations" or better on 18/22 items with no Below Expectation ratings, as assessed by the attached rubric.

Attached Files

 [Capstone Psychotherapy Rubric](#)

Findings Description:

100% of students (n=16) who enrolled in Practicum I, II, and/or III (PSYC 6391, 6392, 6393) passed the courses with satisfactory evaluations from instructors and supervisors.

100% of third-year students (n=8) passed the Psychotherapy Case Study Capstone.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

A - Psychotherapy Skills

Action Description:

To date, the new clinical training sequence appears successful. In particular, the modification of the Practicum I class to allow students to begin working with real clients under close faculty supervision has been well-received by both students and external practicum supervisors. With formative practice presentations in Practicum I and II, students are performing very well on the Psychotherapy Capstone.

Nevertheless, the training sequence and assessment will continue to be monitored to ensure that students successfully achieve the minimum level of competency in clinical intervention. The DCT and Core Faculty will consider possible revision to the Practicum evaluation form to align with APA metrics for the intervention competency at the MA level.

G - Scientific Competence

Goal Description:

Students will demonstrate scientific competence for Master-level Health Service Psychology practice.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

LO - Scientific Competence

Learning Objective Description:

Students demonstrate foundational knowledge of relevant statistics, methodology, and psychometrics for Masters-level Health Service Psychology practice.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF - Scientific Competence

Indicator Description:

Students demonstrate knowledge of statistics, methodology, and psychometrics relevant to Masters-level Health Service Psychology practice, which can include the production of new research and/or the knowledge needed to be a competent consumer of research.

The first indicator of competency for all students includes successfully completing three courses (PSYC 5387, Advanced Statistics; PSYC 5388 Experimental Design; PSYC 5394 Psychometrics) with a grade of B or better.

For students entering the program in fall 2023 or later, the second indicator of competency can be demonstrated in one of two ways: (a) successfully defending a Masters thesis project, OR (b) successfully passing a written exam assessing applied knowledge of statistics and experimental methods.

Regarding the second option, the written exam will consist of the Statistics/Experimental Design essay question of the MA Experimental Psychology comprehensive exam. Non-thesis MA Clinical Psychology students will take the exam at the end of their 2nd year in the program, along with 2nd year MA Experimental Psychology students. Each exam question will be scored by two qualified faculty members using the comprehensive examination rubric attached below.

Attached Files

 [CompsNewRubricFinal2023.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

All (100%) students will pass with a grade of B or better PSYC 5387, Advanced Statistics; PSYC 5388 Experimental Design; and PSYC 5394 Psychometrics.

For students entering the program in fall 2023 or later, 100% of students will EITHER (a) conduct and successfully defend a supervised thesis project, OR (b) take and pass the written exam assessing applied scientific knowledge.

Findings Description:

100% of students passed PSYC 5387 Advanced Statistics, PSYC 5388 Experimental Design, and PSYC 5394 Psychometrics with a grade of B or better.

The second metric in this domain will be measured beginning this coming (2025) spring with students who entered the program in 2023.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Scientific Competence

Action Description:

An announcement and the 2023-2024 Program Handbook introduced the 2023 incoming cohort to the new scientific competency assessment. That cohort successfully met the first metric by passing PSYC 5387 Advanced Statistics, PSYC 5388 Experimental Design, and PSYC 5394 Psychometrics in their first year of the program. A reminder will be sent to all current second year students about the new metric to prepare non-thesis students for the spring examination. Subsequently, the Core Faculty will evaluate the effectiveness of this examination in assessing the minimum level of scientific competence.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

As a gap year for clinical training and capstone administration related to sequence reorganization, no findings or actions are reported for AY 2022-2023.

In the next assessment cycle, however, all MA Clinical Psychology students in their 3rd year of training will take both parts of the Comprehensive exam. In addition, the program will add a 3rd goal/LO/ICF to address a potential gap in requirements for APA Accreditation, specifically scientific competence. Students will demonstrate scientific competence through (a) successful completion of 3 courses (PSYC 5387, Advanced Statistics; PSYC 5388 Experimental Design; PSYC 5394 Psychometrics) and (b) either completion of a thesis or passing a written essay exam (administered at end of 2nd year, concurrently with the MA Experimental Psychology comprehensive exams).

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

All third-year students took and passed the Comprehensive Exams. An announcement and the 2023-2024 Program Handbook introduced the 2023 incoming cohort to the new scientific competency assessment. That cohort successfully met the first metric by passing PSYC 5387 Advanced Statistics, PSYC 5388 Experimental Design, and PSYC 5394 Psychometrics in their first year of the program. In the coming spring of 2025, the second metric (exam) will be administered.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary:

To date, the new clinical training sequence appears successful and students are performing very well in practicum and on the Psychotherapy Capstone. Nevertheless, the training sequence and assessment will continue to be monitored to ensure that students successfully achieve the minimum level of competency in clinical intervention. The DCT and Core Faculty will consider possible revision to the Practicum evaluation form to more closely align with APA metrics for the intervention competency at the MA level.

While all goals were met this year, the Core Faculty will discuss the timing of the Assessment Capstone, which is one of two parts of the Comprehensive Exam and as such takes place during the final semester of training. However, some students who do not conduct assessment during practicum may experience greater anxiety due to the gap between coursework and the capstone examination. Alternatively, faculty will also discuss possible ways to reduce student anxiety by offering a prep/review workshop and/or materials for the exam.

The new goal for scientific competency will be fully implemented this year when non-thesis students take a Statistics/Experimental Design exam in the spring of 2025. A reminder will be sent to all current second year students with an invitation for questions and clarifications. As a new initiative, the Core Faculty will subsequently evaluate the effectiveness of this examination in assessing the minimum level of scientific competence for our graduates and determine if changes are needed.

Clinical Psychology PhD

APA Accreditation

Goal Description:

Maintain APA accreditation.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology PhD

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Retain APA Accreditation

Performance Objective Description:

This program will retain APA accreditation by assembling all paperwork, submitting an annual report, and responding to all questions/requests from APA Committee on Accreditation (CoA).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Submit Self-Study And Annual Report As Required

KPI Description:

Program faculty will submit both a complete self-study and an annual report to the APA Commission on Accreditation (CoA) by the appropriate deadlines.

Target Description:

100% of all required reports and correspondence will be submitted to the APA CoA by the required deadline.

Results Description:

100% of data required for Annual Reporting Online were collected and submitted to the American Psychological Association Commission on Accreditation (CoA).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Submit Self-Study And Annual Report As Required

Action Description:

Continue to monitor student progress and collect required data from students and faculty to fulfill accreditation reporting requirements. Continue to use Tevera to facilitate data collection and reporting.

Ability To Conduct Empirical Research

Goal Description:

To produce graduates with the skills to conduct meaningful research that adds to the current body of knowledge in psychology.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology PhD

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Students Will Be Able To Evaluate And Conduct Psychological Research

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate the ability to design, carry out, prepare, and submit for publication to scientific journals or for presentation at scientific paper sessions original research.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Preparation Of Research Materials For Publication/Presentation

Indicator Description:

Students will prepare manuscripts for publication in scientific journals or presentation at national conventions. Acceptance for publication or presentation will be the indicator.

Criterion Description:

At least 50% of the students beyond their first year will have materials accepted for publication or presentation at a national conference. First year students will be engaged actively in research projects sponsored by program faculty. Students will review feedback from journal editors or conference program individuals with their faculty research mentors to determine how to revise the manuscript or presentation proposal to address weaknesses and resubmit.

Findings Description:

30/35 (86%) of current students either published a peer-reviewed manuscript or delivered a scientific presentation over the last year.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Preparation of Research Materials For Publication/Presentation

Action Description:

Continue to apply mentor model to student admissions and training to facilitate student scholarly achievements. Continue to engage new faculty in co-mentoring to develop their competency in research mentoring.

Broad Knowledge Of Psychology

Goal Description:

A broad-based knowledge of scientific psychology will include knowledge of psychology's history of thought and development, research methods, and applications.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology PhD

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Broad-based Knowledge Of Psychology As A Science

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate a core understanding of the scientific foundation of psychology, including biological, social, developmental, and cognitive/affective bases of behavior, history and systems of psychology, psychological measurement, research methodology, techniques of data analysis, and issues of cultural and individual diversity.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Comprehensive Examinations And The EPPP

Indicator Description:

Students will demonstrate a broad-based knowledge of the scientific bases of behavior as measured by:

- 1. Performance in taking/passing Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (DCE)
- 2. Performance on an external, standardized examination, the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP).

Criterion Description:

1. Students are expected to pass Doctoral Comprehensive Exams (DCE). The DCE gives the student 24 hours in which to analyze a clinical case and answer specific questions as well as review a selected research article (12 hours for each task on consecutive days). Unsuccessful completion of the DCE requires a re-examination. The student is allowed one re-examination; a second failure triggers program dismissal.
2. Students are expected to sit for and pass the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) as a requirement for licensure as a psychologist. Eighty percent of students who take the EPPP will pass it.

Findings Description:

1. 100% of doctoral students who were administered the DCE passed the exam.
2. According to the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards, 93% of graduates (i.e., 37/40) who took the EPPP between 1 Jan 17 and 31 Dec 23 passed the exam.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Comprehensive Exams and the EPPP

Action Description:

Continue to deliver curriculum consistent with *APA Standards of Accreditation* to ensure requisite discipline-specific knowledge and competencies to ensure success on the EPPP.

Continue to monitor performance of program graduates on the EPPP and adjust training if/when shortcomings are identified. Examine comprehensive exam process for ways to enhance student success.

Effective Clinical Practice

Goal Description:

To produce graduates who have the knowledge and skills to excel in the practice of clinical psychology.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology PhD

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Acquire The Skills And Ability To Practice Clinical Psychology

Performance Objective Description:

Students must demonstrate skills in the service delivery in broad and general clinical areas.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

APA-Accredited Internship

KPI Description:

All students must complete a one-year predoctoral internship.

Target Description:

100% of students applying for pre-doctoral internships will obtain them.

Results Description:

100% of doctoral candidates who applied for internship were rated as competent (i.e., ready for internship) across all domains of discipline-specific knowledge, profession-wide competencies, and program-specific competencies.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

APA-Accredited Internship

Action Description:

Continue to monitor student progress and collect required data from student and faculty to fulfill accreditation reporting requirements. Continue to use Tevera to facilitate data collection and reporting.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Effective Clinical Practice

KPI Description:

Effective use of assessment, treatment planning, intervention, consultation, and supervision strategies.

Target Description:

100% of students who apply for internship will be rated as "competent" for internship across all profession-wide competencies specified by the American Psychological Association Commission on Accreditation (ethics, multicultural, assessment, intervention, supervision, consultation, communication, research, professional values) and the program-specific competency of forensic research and practice.

Results Description:

100% of doctoral candidates who applied for internship were matched to an APA-Accredited site.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Effective Clinical Practice

Action Description:

Continue to provide didactic and experiential training related to clinical practice. Monitor student performance at internal and external practicum sites. Provide remediation if/when deficits in skills development are observed.

Effective Teaching

Goal Description:

Faculty demonstrate high levels of teaching effectiveness.

Providing Department: Clinical Psychology PhD

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Providing Effective Undergraduate Classroom Instruction

Learning Objective Description:

Faculty demonstrate high levels of teaching effectiveness.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Individual Developmental Education Assessment (IDEA)

Indicator Description:

Students rate the Teaching Assistants using IDEA.

Criterion Description:

A summary IDEA score at or above the institution mean is considered to be satisfactory. Consistent with IDEA recommendations, converted averages on IDEA evaluations that are in the gray box (middle 40%) are considered to be "effective teaching." All faculty have students evaluate each of their classes during the Fall and Spring semesters using the IDEA teaching evaluations. The IDEA system focuses on students' perceptions of learning 12 specific objectives, and the system solicits students' feedback on their own learning progress, effort, and motivation, as well as their perceptions of the instructor's use of 20 instructional strategies and teaching methods. In addition, the system surveys instructors regarding their overall goals and highlights for them in the analysis and report.

The system adjusts evaluation scores for five areas beyond the instructor's control, such as class size, student motivation, effort and work habits, and disciplinary difficulty. The scores are then compared to national norms. Teaching effectiveness is assessed by: Overall Ratings and the average student agreement with statements that the instructor and class were excellent.

Findings Description:

Doctoral students in Clinical Psychology taught Introduction to Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, and Psychology of Adjustment.

For the Fall 2023 semester, IDEA summary scores ranged from 4.1 to 4.9, with an average of 4.5.

For the Spring 2024 semester, IDEA summary scores ranged from 3.6 to 4.7, with an average of 4.2.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Individual Developmental Education Assessment (IDEA)

Action Description:

Continue to monitor, mentor, and advise doctoral student instructors to ensure success in the classroom. Continue to implement ongoing support meetings for new instructors.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

1. The Program will ensure compliance with profession-wide standards by maintaining APA accreditation. This will involve responding to final questions and requests for data from the APA Commission on Accreditation (CoA). The program will also gather data required to ensure compliance with annual reporting requirements. We successfully resolved APAs request regarding compliance with CoA's standards regarding the faculty-student ratio. We will work with the Dean's office on implementing strategies for filling open faculty searches.
2. The Program will continue to strive to produce graduates capable of making empirical contributions to the field of psychology. To this end, we will continue to implement the mentor model that facilitates students' involvement in research as early as during their first year. New program faculty members will continue to be assigned to senior faculty members to co-mentor doctoral students. This will provide additional support for student research while providing new faculty the opportunity to learn mentoring techniques through modeling provided by their more experienced colleagues--also offering an opportunity to learn from new faculty who have more recently been brought through their own mentoring processes. These learning experiences will contribute positively to the student body as a whole.
3. The Program will strive to maintain student internship matching success by continuing to provide support for applicants. Program faculty, including the DCT, will continue to provide applicants feedback and guidance related to their application materials. The DCT will also continue meeting with applicants, beginning in the summer semester, and will continue to facilitate mock interviews to prepare prospective interns for the internship interviewing process they will undergo over the coming year.
4. The Program will continue to produce graduates capable of effective instruction at the college level. Second-year students will have the opportunity to engage in classroom or online instruction under the supervision of the DCT and other Department leaders. The Graduate School will continue to provide didactic training and the Department will continue to provide mentorship and support. We have begun discussions with the PACE Center regarding additional training opportunities. Ideally, the doctoral student instructors will be compensated for completing these trainings.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

1. The Doctoral Program has submitted responses to all final requests for information from the Commission on Accreditation, which were accepted. The Program has submitted all data needed for the APA Annual Reporting Online (ARO) requirement. The Interim Report submitted by the Program was accepted with no need for additional edits.
2. The doctoral program continues to encounter success with the mentor model as well as co-mentoring for incoming faculty.
3. The doctoral achieved a 100% match rate for internship. We continued to actively shepherd students through the internship application process to ensure their continued success. Ongoing meetings with the Director of Clinical Training and mock interviews with faculty and alumni involved in training interns was very effective.
4. Doctoral students continued to experience success in the classroom as instructors. Ongoing support provided by the DCT and Dean of Graduate Studies went quite well. Incoming instructors attended training provided by Dean Chelsea Smith regarding early intervention with students indicating problematic behavioral tendencies. We will continue to coordinate with the Dean of Graduate Studies in exploring further utilization of university resources to promote student teaching success.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

1. The Program will ensure compliance with profession-wide standards by maintaining APA accreditation. This will involve responding to final questions and requests for data from the APA Commission on Accreditation (CoA). The program will also gather data required to ensure compliance with annual reporting requirements. We successfully hired three new faculty members, which was instrumental in resolving CoA's recent concerns about compliance with standards regarding the faculty-student ratio and solidifying the Program's stability for the ongoing future.
2. The Program will continue to strive to produce graduates capable of making empirical contributions to the field of psychology. To this end, we will continue to implement the mentor model that facilitates students' involvement in research as early as during their first year. New program faculty members will continue to be assigned to senior faculty members to co-mentor doctoral students. This will provide additional support for student research while providing new faculty the opportunity to learn mentoring techniques through modeling provided by their more experienced colleagues--also offering an opportunity to learn from new faculty who have more recently been brought through their own mentoring processes. These learning experiences will contribute positively to the student body as a whole.
3. The Program will strive to maintain student internship matching success by continuing to provide support for applicants. Program faculty, including the DCT, will continue to provide applicants feedback and guidance related to their application materials. The DCT will also continue meeting with applicants, beginning in the summer semester, and will continue to facilitate mock interviews to prepare prospective interns for the internship interviewing process they will undergo over the coming year.
4. The Program will continue to produce graduates capable of effective instruction at the college level. Second-year students will have the opportunity to engage in classroom or online instruction under the supervision of the DCT and other Department leaders. We will continue to collaborate with The Graduate School to provide didactic training to student instructors, and the Department will continue to provide mentorship and support.
5. Program faculty members will assess and make plans to address future curricular needs that will enhance the success of our students. Further, clinical supervisors will work with the DCT and Clinic Director to evaluate the appropriateness of new potential practicum sites as well as current placements in their

effectiveness in meeting student training objectives. Any potential new sites will be vetted by the DCT and Clinic Director. These ongoing measures are designed to ensure students' mastery of the broad, general knowledge of psychology as a discipline and enhance their training in effective clinical practice.

Experimental Psychology MA

G - Foundational Competence

Goal Description:

Students develop broad-based knowledge and competence in the scientific, theoretical, and conceptual foundations of general psychology.

Providing Department: Experimental Psychology MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

LO - Foundational Competence

Learning Objective Description:

Students demonstrate competency in the areas of experimental psychology through synthesis and integration of scientific, methodological, and theoretical foundations.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF - Comprehensive Exams

Indicator Description:

Students demonstrate through a written comprehensive examination their knowledge of and ability to integrate the core areas of experimental psychology.

Criterion Description:

100% of students must pass comprehensive examination prior to graduation. Students are given a written exam of which they must complete the Statistics/Experimental Design question and complete 4 of 5 of the remaining questions which are all from foundational courses. Criteria for passing: the student must provide integrative responses that reveal an understanding of the information and experiences to which they have been exposed; they must provide complete references for all works cited using proper APA style; they must demonstrate their knowledge of the science in the field and support their answers, arguments, theories, logic, etc. with scientific research studies when applicable. Each question will be scored using a rubric by two faculty members who have expertise in the particular area. An average score of 9 or higher is needed to pass each question attempted, and students must pass all 5 questions. An example of the [revised 2020] comprehensive examination rubric is attached.

Attached Files

 [Revised MA Experimental Psyc Comps Rubric](#)

Findings Description:

100% of students passed the comprehensive exams during the 2023-2024 academic year and passed all 5 of the questions.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

A - Comprehensive Exams

Action Description:

An announcement, a comprehensive exam training workshop, and the updated 2023-2024 Program Handbook introduced the 2022 and the 2023 incoming cohort to the new comprehensive exam requirements. 100% of the 2022 cohort who took comprehensive exams successfully passed. The 2023 cohort will be taking comprehensive exams during the spring of 2025 and will be encouraged to participate in the comprehensive exam training workshop. The 2024-2025 cohort will be informed of the comprehensive exam requirements as well as those

steps to help them be successful with announcements, during advising, during the PSYC 5331 (Graduate Seminar) course, during the comprehensive exam workshop, and via the 2024-2025 Program Handbook.

G - Research Competence

Goal Description:

Students develop increased competence in research methodology and statistical analyses.

Providing Department: Experimental Psychology MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

LO - Research Competence

Learning Objective Description:

Students demonstrate knowledge and skills related to competency in research methodology and statistical analyses.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF - Research Competence

Indicator Description:

All students in the program will (a) take the PSYC 5388 (Advanced Experimental Design) and PSYC 5387 (Advanced Statistics) courses AND (b) pass the PSYC 5388 and PSYC 5387 courses AND (c) pass the Stats/Experimental Design question on the Comprehensive Exam.

Criterion Description:

Students demonstrate research competency when they (a) successfully complete the PSYC 5388 (Experimental Design) and the PSYC 5387 (Advanced Statistics) courses with a grade of B or better, AND (b) when they pass the written comprehensive exam question covering experimental design and statistics.

Attached Files

 [Manuscript Grading Rubric for PSYC 5388](#)

Findings Description:

100% of students in the program demonstrated research competence by (a) successfully completing the PSYC 5388 (Experimental Design) and the PSYC 5387 (Advanced Statistics) courses with a grade of B or better during the 2023-2024 academic year, AND 100% of students taking the comprehensive exams during the 2023-224 academic year passed the comprehensive exam question covering experimental design and statistics.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

A - Research Competence

Action Description:

An announcement and the updated 2023-2024 Program Handbook introduced the 2023 incoming cohort to the new research competency assessments. 100% of the 2023 cohort successfully met the first metric by passing PSYC 5388 (Experimental Design) and PSYC 5387 (Advanced Statistics) in their first year of the program. Further, 100% of the 2022 cohort has successfully met the second metric by passing the experimental design/statistics question on the comprehensive exams. The 2024-2025 cohort will be informed of the research competency assessments with an announcement, advising, during the PSYC 5331 course (Graduate Seminar), and via the 2024-2025 Program Handbook.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

In 2023-2024 AY, The MA Experimental Psychology program will focus on improvement to the comprehensive exam process. To that end, several revisions will be made to the process: (a) Time allotted for the exam will be increased from 24 hours to 72 hours, (b) The instructor of the graduate seminar, which is taken in the first semester of the program, will cover expectations for the comprehensive exams and provide guidance on how to prepare for the exam throughout their time in the program, (c) Faculty will create study sheets for each major domain/question to assist students in exam preparation, and (d) a new rubric will be developed for implementation in the coming year.

Although the program is removing research involvement in faculty labs as a criterion for research competence, the MA committee will initiate two additional changes to ensure research competence for all students: (a) students will be required to answer the previously optional Statistics/Experimental Design Comprehensive exam question as one of the five (out of six possibilities) questions they must answer, and (b) a second advanced Statistics course will be added to the required curriculum in the 2024-2025 catalog.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

The MA Experimental program focused on improvement of two main areas (1) improvement in the comprehensive exam process and (2) improvement in student research competence. The changes made to the comprehensive exam process (described above) were very successful and well accepted by students and the program. The success rate on the comprehensive exams was 100% for students in the 2023-2024 Academic Year. While required involvement in faculty labs was removed as one of the criterion for research competence during the 2023-2024 Academic Year, the program focused on performance in the Experimental Design and Statistics courses as well as performance on the Experimental Design/Statistics question on the comprehensive exam to evaluate research competency. Research competence was demonstrated by all graduating students in the program as all MA Experimental graduate students passed both the Experimental Design and Statistics courses and all 3 students who took comprehensive exams passed the Experimental Design/Statistics question. Further, the new Advanced Statistics II course will be offered in the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary:

Both major items (improvement in comprehensive exam performance and better assessment of research competence) that were a focus during the 2023-2024 Academic Year indicated that the changes made by the program were successful. As such, we plan to continue those changes that were made to improve comprehensive exam performance and to continue to assess research competence for the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

While not addressed during the 2023-2024 Academic Year, the program would like to explore possible avenues for better promoting the MA Experimental Psychology program in order to increase the size and quality of the applicant pool. Additionally, the program faculty would like to explore ways to recruit a more diverse pool of qualified applicants.

School Psychology SSP

Foundational Competence In School Psychology

Goal Description:

Students develop competence in the scientific, theoretical and conceptual foundations of professional school psychology.

Providing Department: School Psychology SSP

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Foundational Competency In School Psychology

Learning Objective Description:

Students demonstrate competency in the scientific, methodological and theoretical foundations of professional school psychology.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

National School Psychology Exam (PRAXIS II) [Foundational Competence]

Indicator Description:

The PRAXIS II School Psychology Exam is a nationally administered examination used to determine an individual’s qualification for licensure to practice within the field. Candidate competency is evaluated with respect to the following four domains:

- 1. Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery
- 2. Direct & Indirect Services for Children, Families and Schools
- 3. Systems Level Services
- 4. Professional Practices: Practices that Permeate All Aspects of Service and Delivery).

Criterion Description:

A minimum score of 147 is required on this examination to obtain the credential of Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). Thus, a score of 147 or better has been established by the SSP Program as the criterion for this objective. In addition, candidates are expected to perform at or above the average range provided by the test developers for each of the four subcategories.

Findings Description:

All eight Interns passed the Praxis exam for the 2024 year. This is a 100% pass rate and meets NASP expectations for accreditation.

Attached Files

 [Table 1, Praxis data, 2024.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

National School Psychology Exam (PRAXIS II) [Foundational Competence]

Action Description:

The Praxis is a national examination used to determine a student's qualifications for pursuing professional licensure to work as a school psychologist. This is the standard for our field, and no change to the use of this measure is planned.

Skill Application

Goal Description:

Students develop competence in skill application of professional school psychology in a public school setting.

Providing Department: School Psychology SSP

Progress: Completed

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Skill Application

Learning Objective Description:

Candidates in the school psychology program demonstrate knowledge and improving skill application commensurate with their level of training. Specifically, candidates in their final practicum placement and on internship, both held within the public school setting, will demonstrate appropriate application of professional school psychology skills in the 10 Domains of Professional Practice detailed by NASP.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Faculty Rating of Case Effectiveness

Indicator Description:

Faculty review every case submitted by candidates completing their Internship. The cases are rated by the faculty on both the Case Study Rubric and the Procedural Integrity Rubric.

Attached Files

 [Case Study Rubric.doc](#)

 [A-PIR.docx](#)

 [B-PIR.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

For the Case Study Rubric (CSR), candidates are expected to demonstrate 85% of the actions included in the rubric which demonstrate an effective case intervention.

For the Procedural Integrity Rubric (PIR), candidates should not have any missing case elements and they should meet the minimum cut score for the academic (24) and behavioral (21) cases.

Findings Description:

The SSP Program is working with Tevera, an online platform that allows digital data collection, to assist with access and storage of the faculty ratings. The system is not yet finished, and thus this data will be uploaded as soon as possible.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Faculty Rating of Case Effectiveness

Action Description:

The Program will work to finish the intervention case rating capabilities within the Tevera system. Faculty will be assigned cases for rating and they will complete these ratings as soon as feasible. Once this data is gathered it will be entered into this system.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Positive Impact Data

Indicator Description:

Positive Impact Data

Quantitative data gathered as part of the case intervention is to include slope (or rate) of improvement (e.g., R-squared), effect size (e.g., Cohen's d) and/or Percentage of Non-Overlapping Data Points (PND).

Candidates completing the Internship Portfolio assessment will submit quantitative data gathered as part of their two case interventions (e.g., academic and behavioral).

Criterion Description:

Based on the quantitative data included as part of the Behavioral Consultation and Intervention and Academic Assessment and Intervention case submissions, the candidate's impact on student behavior and/or learning can be calculated in a variety of ways. Effect size (e.g., Cohen's d) allows for the comparison of the standard mean difference in student performance during baseline and treatment phases of intervention. An effect size of .8 is considered to be of moderate impact. For academic cases, the slope (R-squared) should be reported. In such cases, a moderate effect of at least 0.09 is expected. Candidates are expected to demonstrate moderate impact through either effect size or PND calculation for both of the cases submitted. Percentage of Non-overlapping Data points, or PND, provides a comparison of the percentage of data points during the treatment phase that do not overlap with the most extreme baseline phase point. A PND calculation of 60% is considered to be of moderate impact. Candidates are expected to (1) accurately report the correct type of quantitative information and (2) demonstrate moderate impact on student outcomes for at least one of the cases submitted.

Findings Description:

All eight Interns were successful in submitting two case reports, one academic and one behavioral, that included effect size calculations as well as percentage of nonoverlapping data points. The reports submitted were substantially better than those submitted by the prior cohort! Positive impact data supported 7 of 8 academic cases and 7 of 8 behavioral cases were successful and positively impacted the children with whom our students were working.

Attached Files

 [Tables for Positive Impact Statistics 2024.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Rating Forms and Positive Impact Data

Action Description:

The Extern and Intern rating forms will not be changed until accreditation review is complete.

The Program faculty is very pleased with the substantial improvement in quality of the intervention reports received this year. We will continue to find ways to support Interns in completing high quality projects that demonstrate positive impact on children's performance in school. We would like to have more Interns submit their final cases closer to spring break.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Supervisor Rating of Internship Experience

Indicator Description:

All Interns will be rated by their field supervisors at the conclusion of their Internship experience.

Attached Files

 [Intern Competency Rating Form, 2023 Final.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

The rating scale ranges from 1 to 5, with scores of 1 indicating areas of concern, 2 indicating an area in need of continued development, and scores of 3, 4 or 5 indicating skill competence has been met.

Findings Description:

All eight Interns were rated by their supervisors as meeting competence. This is a 100% competence achievement by this cohort. All students graduated in May, 2024.

Attached Files

 [TABLE 3, Intern Supervisor rating, 2024.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Supervisor Rating of Intern

Action Description:

The rating form in use is aligned with the current NASP Standards, and should not be revised until the Program has completed the accreditation review.

Faculty will work with Tevera to include a summary calculation of the student's average score across all ten Domains.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Supervisor Rating of Practicum Experience

Indicator Description:

Each year candidate performance during their final practical experiences will be rated by their field supervisor.

Attached Files

 [Sp 2023 Extern Supervisor Rating Form.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

The rating scale ranges from 1 to 5, with ratings falling at level 3 indicating competence. Ratings of 1 would indicate that a candidate is in need of development in that area.

Findings Description:

All six students completing their final practical experiences were rated as Competent with Supervision Needed. This is in line with their level of program completion. All students are deemed ready to progress to the Internship during the 2024-2025 school year.

Attached Files

 [TABLE 2, Extern Supervisor rating, 2024.docx](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Supervisor Rating of Practicum Experience

Action Description:

We will work with Tevera to include a summary data calculation that averages a student's scores across all domains. The evaluation currently in use is aligned with the newest NASP Standards and should not be changed until our Program has undergone accreditation review.

Faculty will monitor student opportunities within Domain 6 and Domain 7 at Externship sites.

New Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

The past year saw significant updates made to the SSP Program evaluation system. These changes will remain in place for two additional years during data collection for our next Initial Report submission related to Program NASP Approval/CAEP Accreditation.

1. All aspects of Program evaluation will be implemented in Tevera.

2. Program faculty will more equally share advising and student evaluation duties.

The SSP Program faculty has lost two valuable junior faculty in the past two years. The Program now has one senior faculty member, a junior faculty member who has completed one year at SHSU and two incoming junior faculty members. There will be much emphasis on faculty support and development during the coming year!

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

The Program faculty has successfully been sharing the load of student advisement. We will continue to implement this program and make changes as needed.

All but one aspect of our data collection is fully functional within the Tevera system. We will continue to work on bringing the final piece - the faculty rating of cases - online within the system.

The Program had one of the two new faculty leave for private practice. Thus, we now have three FTE faculty and we will conduct another search this year for a fourth faculty member.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The Program continues to work on hiring and maintaining four full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty members.

The Program is entering data collection years for an upcoming accreditation review. The review process has changed substantially, so Program faculty will work this year to become familiar with what changes may need to be implemented and make that happen.

The Program hopes to continue the work begun last year to update our website and improve its function as a student recruitment tool.

Department of Sociology

1. Achieve Sociological Competency: Entry Level

Goal Description:

Students who take introductory sociology classes will gain basic knowledge of social life, social change, and the causes and consequences of human behavior.

Providing Department: Sociology BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Entry Level

Learning Objective Description:

Students who take introductory sociology classes that are included in the SHSU Core Curriculum will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the basic core concepts of the discipline and the sociological perspective.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Comprehension Of Basic Core Concepts: Entry Level

Indicator Description:

A sample of students enrolled in the two introduction-level sociology courses in the SHSU Core Curriculum (SOCI 2319 in Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts and SOC: I1301 in Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences) is chosen in the Spring semester for evaluation. Employing an extra credit opportunity format, students responded to a ten-question evaluation instrument for the Component Area V courses (see Attachment #1) and five question evaluation for the Component Area IV course (see Attachment #2) to measure their understanding of basic core concepts in Sociology. The selection of these indicators conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological research.

In this cycle, we included item-by-item analyses to assess students’ understanding of the sub-concepts of basic core concepts of the discipline indicated by the SHSU Core Curriculum.

- 1. Two sub-concept areas corresponding to Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts: (a) Concept 1- To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within a historical and social context (questions 1, 2, and 4); and (b) Concept 2 - to demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences (questions 3 and 5).
- 2. Five sub-concept areas corresponding to the Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences: (a) Concept 1- to employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition. (Q2, Q7); (b) Concept 2 - to examine social institutions and processes across various historical periods, social structures, and cultures. (Q4, Q9); (c) Concept 3 - to use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories. (Q1, Q6); (d) Concept 4 - to develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues. (Q3, Q8); and (e) Concept 5 - to identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures. (Q5, Q10).

Attached Files

[Attach1.BA.BSEntryLevelCompAreaV.Questions.19.20.docx](#)

[Attach2.BABSEntryLevelCompAreaIVQuestions19.20.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

At least 85% of participating students should have 3 correct answers out of 5 questions for Component Area IV and 85% oat least 6 correct answers out of the 10 questions for Component Area V. For Component Area IV: At least 85% of participating students should have at least 2 correct answers out of the 3 questions for Concept 1, and at least 1 correct answer out of the 2 questions for Concept 2. For Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences, at least 85% of participating students should have at least 1 correct answer out of the 2 questions for each of the five concepts.

Findings Description:

For Component Area IV (SOCI 2319), 159 students participated in the assessment. Overall, 94% of students had at least three out of five correct answers. For concept 1, 96% of students had at least two out of three correct answers. For concept 2, 91% of the students had at least one out of two answers.

For Component Area V (SOCI 1301), 120 students participated in the assessment. Overall, 84% of the students had at least six out of ten correct answers. For the five concepts, the percent of participating students who got 1 out of 2 correct answers are as follows:

- Concept 1: 97%
- Concept 2: 80%
- Concept 3: 83%
- Concept 4: 95%
- Concept 5: 86%

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Comprehension Of Basic Core Concepts: Entry Level

Action Description:

For Component Area IV, the department exceeded its goal.

For Component Area V, student performance improved slightly over the previous year. The department just missed its goal of 85% of students answering six or more of the assessment questions correctly. While student performance improved in concepts 2 and 3 from the previous year, the department is still below its benchmark. The department will continue to work with SOCI 1301 instructors to strengthen these dimensions of the curriculum.

In Spring 2025, SOCI 1301 instructors will be given access to interactive learning exercises targeting the application of theoretical perspectives, and encouraged to use them, for each topical, substantive textbook chapter (i.e., all content after Ch. 5).

2. Sociological Competency: Mid-level

Goal Description:

Students who complete the mid-level assessment course, SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology, will gain knowledge and skills in thinking and writing sociologically.

Providing Department: Sociology BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Mid-level

Learning Objective Description:

Sociology majors will be able to demonstrate the ability to think and write sociologically.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Sociological Mid-level Papers

Indicator Description:

The SOCI 2399: Writing in Sociology is required as a mid-level course to achieve a BA/BS in Sociology. A sociological essay is a requirement of the class. A random sample of approximately one-fifth of student essays was selected from the SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology class in the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters for assessment of their ability to think and write sociologically.

Members of the Undergraduate Assessment Committee reviewed the selected papers at the end of the Spring semester based on two main areas: sociological content and sociological writing. Sociological content includes three criteria: understanding social forces, applying sociological concepts, and providing empirical evidence. Sociological writing style includes three criteria: adopting American Sociological Association format, demonstrating a formal academic writing style, and minimizing grammatical errors. The selection of these criteria conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological thinking and writing (see Attachment #1).

Each paper was evaluated by three Undergraduate Assessment Committee members using the evaluation rubric, where a score from 1 to 5 (1 is “no mastery” and 5 is “excellent mastery”) is assigned in each of the six criteria in the two main areas.

Criterion Description:

At least 75% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for each of the two main areas: Sociological Content and Sociological Writing Style.

Attached Files

 [MidLevelRubric23_24.docx](#)

Findings Description:

Seven of the eight (87.5%) student essays meet the minimum requirement of an overall average score of 3.0 for Sociological Content and Sociological Writing. The average combined score for the eight papers is 3.7/5.0. The results of the inter-item analysis reveal that students performed better on the Writing Area (3.8/5.0) than the Content Area (3.40/5.0). The results also indicate that, on average, papers meet or exceed the 3.0 desired minimum score for each of the six criteria.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Sociological Mid-Level Papers

Action Description:

The department met and exceeded expectations. No actions are necessary.

3. Sociological Competency: Exit Level

Goal Description:

Students who complete the Sociology Program will have an advance understanding of the core concepts of the discipline and the sociological perspective.

Providing Department: Sociology BA/BS

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Exit Level

Learning Objective Description:

Sociology majors will be able to demonstrate and apply advanced sociological knowledge and scientific skills to analyze social phenomenon through a capstone research paper.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Sociological Papers: Exit Level

Indicator Description:

The SOCI 4399: Senior Seminar class is a required capstone course to achieve a BA/BS in Sociology. A sociological research paper is a requirement of the class. A random sample of twenty-five percent of student research papers was selected from the SOCI 4399: Senior Seminar classes in the Fall 2023 semester to assess students' advanced sociological knowledge and scientific skills to analyze social phenomenon.

The Undergraduate Assessment Committee reviews the selected papers at the end of the Spring semester based on three core content criteria in the discipline of Sociology: Sociological Theory, Sociological Methods, and Sociological Perspective; and four core writing criteria: Writing Quality: Academic Writing, Writing Quality, Citations, and Documentation of Sources. The selection of these criteria conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological research (see Attachment #1).

Each paper is evaluated by three Undergraduate Assessment Committee members using the evaluation rubric, where a score from 1 to 5 (1 is “no mastery” and 5 is “excellent mastery”) is assigned in each of the seven core areas.

To continue to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in meeting the core learning objectives in the undergraduate BA and BS programs, for the 2022-2023 cycle we conducted item-by-item analysis in the three core content areas and four core writing areas.

Attached Files

 [Attach1.ExitLevelRubric21.22.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

Overall, at least 80% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for the three core content areas and the four core writing areas.

For item-by-item analysis, at least 80% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for each of the seven core areas.

Findings Description:

Fall 2023 was the last time that SOCI 4399 was offered as the department is transitioning the BA and BS programs to a revised curriculum. Hence, there were only a small number of students who completed the senior seminar.

Overall, 3 of the 4 students' papers (75%) meet the minimum requirement on average across the seven core areas. The average combined score for the eight papers is 3.7/5.0. Regarding the item-by-item analysis of the three core Content areas: 3 out of 4 (75%) for Theory, 3 out of 4 (75%) for Methods, and 3 out of 4 (75%) for Sociological Perspective meet the minimum requirement. Regarding the item-by-item analysis for the four core Writing areas: 3 out of 4 (75%) for Academic Writing, 3 out of 4 (75%) for Spelling and Grammar, 3 out of 4 (75%) for Proper Citations, and 3 out of 4 (75%) for American Sociological Association (ASA) Format, meet the minimum requirement.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Sociological Papers: Exit Level

Action Description:

The department has now transitioned its curriculum, and SOCI 4399 is no longer offered. Thus, the department will be implementing a new assessment mechanism next year.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

For the BA and BS programs in the 2022-2023 academic year, the focus will be on implementing the revised curriculum. As part of the process, course rotations and schedules will need to be adjusted. The department chair and undergraduate coordinator will work on developing a new set of schedules and course rotations to fit with the new BA and BS curriculum. Additionally, the mid-level assessment mechanism will be reviewed, and a new exit level assessment mechanism will be developed.

The Sociology Department will implement a peer mentoring program. At the end of the spring semester, the program's effectiveness will be reviewed, and adjustments made for the 2023-2024 academic year if necessary.

In the spirit of public sociology, the Sociology Department will launch a research initiative to study how issues of inequities impact student success at Sam Houston State University. The aim of this initiative is: (1) to better understand disparities and the ways they affect student experiences at SHSU, (2) to facilitate the development and implementation of programs and policies to assist student success, and (3) to foster academic excellence. The department will seek to use this initiative to increase student participation in research projects.

The department will increase its efforts to recruit more majors from both the current SHSU student body and new students. This will include the use of on-campus activities (e.g., alumni career panels) and off-campus outreach and recruitment efforts.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

For the BA and BS programs in the 2022-2023 academic year, the focus will be on implementing the revised curriculum. As part of the process, course rotations and schedules will need to be adjusted. The department chair and undergraduate coordinator will work on developing a new set of schedules and course rotations to fit with the new BA and BS curriculum. Additionally, the mid-level assessment mechanism will be reviewed, and a new exit level assessment mechanism will be developed.

- The Department has implemented the revised curriculum, including establishing instructors and a rotation for the applied core. The mid-level assessment was reviewed and found to be effective. A revision of the exit-level assessment was delayed a year, as the exit-level requirements were in transition the past year. A new exit-level assessment mechanism will be developed this upcoming academic year.

The Sociology Department will implement a peer mentoring program. At the end of the spring semester, the program's effectiveness will be reviewed, and adjustments made for the 2023-2024 academic year if necessary.

- The sociology department implemented a successful peer mentoring program. The program consisted of monthly events and informal peer mentoring. Each month, the students met up and attended events or discussions that either educated them about future opportunities or encouraged them to socialize and make connections. In Spring 2024, events included a discussion of internships, student-employment opportunities within the Sociology Department, and a Faculty-Student mixer. About peer mentoring, each mentor-mentee pairing is given food vouchers and prompt cards each month. The themes of the prompt cards changed monthly, ranging from approaches to classes and lessons they learned while taking courses, to mental health and how to balance social and academic life. Over 15 students participated in the program in its first year.

In the spirit of public sociology, the Sociology Department will launch a research initiative to study how issues of inequities impact student success at Sam Houston State University. The aim of this initiative is: (1) to better understand disparities and the ways they affect student experiences at SHSU, (2) to facilitate the

development and implementation of programs and policies to assist student success, and (3) to foster academic excellence. The department will seek to use this initiative to increase student participation in research projects.

- This research initiative was successfully launched. One of the projects examined student-parents. This project has generated a report, workshops, presentations on the issue and a set of recommended actions. A second project has examined food security among SHSU students. This project has completed focus groups and a campus-wide survey and is preparing a report for the university administration.

The department will increase its efforts to recruit more majors from both the current SHSU student body and new students. This will include the use of on-campus activities (e.g., alumni career panels) and off-campus outreach and recruitment efforts.

- The department substantially increased its recruiting efforts, including participation in recruiting events, the development of new promotional materials, and a digital advertising campaign. While we do not yet have the final numbers for the fall semester, undergraduate majors are up over 15%.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The emphasis for the 2024-2025 academic year for the BA and BS programs will be on improving program quality and growing enrollment. The department plans to build on recent curriculum changes and recruitment efforts to further grow and strengthen its undergraduate major programs.

The department will evaluate the teaching preparations and loads of tenure-track faculty. The intent is twofold: first, to increase agility in scheduling and course offerings. This will enable the department to better meet enrollment demands and shift the curriculum to meet student demands. Second, it will allow the department to place instructors in classes where they will have the greatest impact. In other words, the department will work to match better instructor teaching strengths with teaching modality and course level.

The department will identify strategic areas of specialization for replacement line(s) and fill positions with opportunities for strategic growth in course offerings. The department has lost three tenured faculty in the past two years. This has given the department an opportunity to evaluate its course offerings and hire faculty that will contribute to the sociology program.

With curriculum changes to the BA and BS programs fully implemented, the department needs to develop and implement a new exit-level assessment for SACS assessment of the BA and BS programs.

Sociology MA

Sociological Competency

Goal Description:

Graduate students who complete the MA program in Sociology will be competent in sociological theory, methods, and analysis and demonstrate comprehension in a topical area or sociological pedagogy.

Providing Department: Sociology MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

1. Sociological Competency In Research

Learning Objective Description:

On completing their graduate study in Sociology, M.A., students who have conducted a thesis or a systematic review of scholarship must demonstrate their ability to: (i) synthesize and critique empirical, sociological work in at least one substantive area (e.g., class, race/ethnicity, gender, community, social movements, etc.), (ii) develop and articulate appropriate research questions.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

1.1. Thesis

Indicator Description:

A successful SOCI MA thesis will be at least 50 and not more than 100 printed pages of referenced, original SOCI research or a meta-analysis of existing research including primary and/or secondary data analysis. The thesis track entails two semesters of work. First, students must take SOCI 6098 Thesis Practicum and successfully defend their thesis proposal. Following the successful defense of their thesis proposal, students then enroll in SOCI 6099 Thesis.

Criterion Description:

All students enrolled in SOCI 6098 Thesis Practicum will successfully defend their thesis proposal.
All students enrolled in SOCI 6099 will successfully defend their thesis.

The committee members of each student will assess their thesis proposal and thesis using the associated rubrics. See attached.

Attached Files

 [Attachment 1- Thesis Proposal rubric](#)

 [Attachment 2 -Thesis rubric](#)

Findings Description:

SOCI 6098: Thesis Practicum

Term	# of students enrolled	# of successful completions
Fall 2023	2	2
Spring 2024	2	2

Among the four students who completed their thesis proposals between Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, two scored proficient and two were exemplary.

SOCI 6099: Thesis

Term	# of students enrolled	# of successful completions
------	------------------------	-----------------------------

Fall 2023	0	0
Spring 2024	2	1

Among the four students who worked on their theses in Spring 2024, one completed their thesis with an exemplary score. The other student has extended their thesis another semester.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

1.1. Thesis

Action Description:

No action is needed at this time. The students who selected the thesis track successfully completed their thesis proposals and theses.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

1.2. Systematic Review of Scholarship

Indicator Description:

A successful review of scholarship requires students to complete a thematic review of one topical area in sociology. A successful review consists of at least 40 peer-review publications and a paper of 25 double-spaced pages or longer that provides an in-depth review and evaluation of sociological research in the topical area. A successful systemic review of scholarship must include the following components: (1) identification of key findings, (2) summary of recent developments, (3) critical evaluation of the current research, (4) identification of future research areas, and (5) discussion of implications for policy and practice. Each review of scholarship will be evaluated by the student’s project director and two reviewers using the evaluation rubric (see attached).

Attached Files

 [review rubric Scholarship.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

All M.A. candidates completing a successful systemic review of scholarship must meet or exceed expectations on all rubric components.

Findings Description:

Two students completed the systemic review of scholarship during the 2023-2024 academic year.

	Systematic Literature Review	
Term	# of attempts	# of passes
Fall 2023	0	0
Spring 2024	1	1
Summer 2024	1	1

The two students who completed the scholarship capstone passed or exceeded expectations in each area on the rubric.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

1.2. Systematic Review of Scholarship

Action Description:

The department met its goal. No action is needed at this time.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

2. Sociological Competency in Teaching

Learning Objective Description:

On completing their graduate study in Sociology, M.A., students who have conducted a teaching capstone must demonstrate understanding of sociological pedagogy and be able to develop sociological courses.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

2.1 Teaching Capstone

Indicator Description:

On completing their graduate study in Sociology, M.A., students who have conducted a teaching capstone must demonstrate understanding of sociological pedagogy and be able to develop two sociological courses. A successful teaching capstone must include the following components: (1) an essay on pedagogy, (2) a teaching philosophy statement, (3) two course syllabi, (4) assignments and lesson plans, (4) an essay justifying the design of the elective course, and (5) teaching demonstration. The student’s project director and two reviewers will evaluate each teaching capstone using the evaluation rubric (see attached).

Attached Files

 [portfolio_rubric.docx](#)

Criterion Description:

All M.A. candidates completing a successful teaching capstone must meet or exceed expectations on all rubric components.

Findings Description:

One student completed the teaching capstone during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Teaching Capstone		
Term	# of attempts	# of passes
Fall 2023	1	1

The one student who completed the teaching capstone met or exceeded expectations on each rubric component.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

2.0 Teaching Capstone

Action Description:

The department met its goal. No action is needed at this time.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Recruitment and Retention of High Quality Students

Performance Objective Description:

The Sociology Department aims to recruit and retain high-quality students for its Master of Arts Program.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Student Recruitment and Retention

KPI Description:

To assess student recruitment and retention, the following data will be collected and measured:

Recruitment:

- 1. Number of applications to the program
- 2. Number of students accepted.
- 3. Number of students denied
- 4. Number of students enrolled

Retention:

- 1. 1-year retention
- 2. 2-year retention
- 3. Average semester to graduation

Target Description:

Recruitment:

- 1. Number of applications to the program: 35
- 2. Number of students accepted: 25
- 3. Number of students enrolled: 20

Retention:

- 1. 1-year retention: 70%
- 2. 2-year retention 70%
- 3. Average semester to graduation: 9

Results Description:

Recruitment:

- 1. Number of applications to the program: 21
- 2. Number of students accepted: 9
- 3. Number of students enrolled: 7

2-Year Retention Rate Fall Cohorts Retained Next Fall			
Fall	Cohort #	Retained #	Retention Rate
F22 Cohort Retained F24	8	NA	NA
F21 Cohort Retained F23	13	5	38%
F20 Cohort Retained F22	14	6	43%
F19 Cohort Retained F21	11	7	64%
F18 Cohort Retained F20	12	4	33%
F17 Cohort Retained F19	18	6	33%

2-Year Retention Rate Spring Cohorts Next Spring			
Spring	Cohort #	Retained #	Retention Rate
S23 Cohort Retained S25	5	NA	NA
S22 Cohort Retained S24	1	-	0%
S21 Cohort Retained S23	4	1	25%
S20 Cohort Retained S22	3	1	33%
S19 Cohort Retained S21	8	2	25%
S18 Cohort Retained S20	5	3	60%

Fall	# of Degrees Awarded	Valid Count Calculating Avg. Terms to Completion	Avg. Terms to Completion
Fall 2023	NA	NA	NA
Fall 2022	5	5	9.2
Fall 2021	2	2	12.5
Fall 2020	4	4	9.3
Fall 2019	1	1	16.0
Fall 2018	4	4	10.0
Fall 2017	4	4	12.0

Spring	# of Degrees Awarded	Valid Count Calculating Avg. Terms to Completion	Avg. Terms to Completion
Spring 2024			
Spring 2023	8	8	9.6
Spring 2022	5	5	9.6
Spring 2021	2	2	9.0
Spring 2020	2	2	18.0
Spring 2019	2	2	8.0
Spring 2018	2	2	12.0

The total number of admissions is below the department goal. Retention rates also continue to be below department targets. The average time to completion has improved.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Student Recruitment and Retention

Action Description:

Action:

The department did not meet its goals in terms of admissions or retention. Despite increasing recruitment efforts, the number of department applications continues to be lower than desired. Retention rates also continued to be below department benchmarks. During the 2023-2024 academic year, the master’s program underwent an external review. Several of the reviewer recommendations target admissions and retention. The department will work on implementing these in 2024-2025.

The department will develop and implement a recruiting plan during the 2023-2024 academic year. The retention rate for students who entered the program in fall 2022 was also significantly below the norm. While many of the students who left the program did so because of personal and extenuating circumstances, the program will work to develop support mechanisms to support student success and retention.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Sociology Department will work to further strengthen the MA program and grow enrollment.

As part of the curriculum revisions, the department will eliminate the 1-credit proseminar and replace it with an orientation. The Graduate Director will develop and implement an orientation program for incoming graduate students.

The Graduate Director and Committee will review and modify the systematic review of scholarship and teaching capstone requirements as necessary. The aim will be to streamline the requirements and balance faculty workload.

As the MA program faces increased competition with the proliferation of online programs, we need to be more effective in promoting the MA program. The Graduate Director and Department Chair will work on developing a recruiting plan and marketing materials.

Increase synchronous, virtual interactions (1) among current students, (2) between department-level administrators and graduate students, (3) between faculty and graduate students, and (4) between alumni and current graduate students.

The Graduate Director and Department Chair will explore the possibility of a 4+1 program for the Sociology Department. If a 4+1 program is feasible, the Sociology Department will seek university approval for such a program.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Sociology Department will work to further strengthen the MA program and grow enrollment.

As part of the curriculum revisions, the department will eliminate the 1-credit proseminar and replace it with an orientation. The Graduate Director will develop and implement an orientation program for incoming graduate students.

- This change to the program was implemented. All incoming students now participate in an orientation.

The Graduate Director and Committee will review and modify the systematic review of scholarship and teaching capstone requirements as necessary. The aim will be to streamline the requirements and balance faculty workload.

- The systematic review of scholarship and teaching capstone requirements were revised to more effectively focus on key learning outcomes.

As the MA program faces increased competition with the proliferation of online programs, we need to be more effective in promoting the MA program. The Graduate Director and Department Chair will work on developing a recruiting plan and marketing materials.

- New promotional materials were developed, and a digital marketing campaign was implemented. The effectiveness of the digital marketing plan will be evaluated in the fall, and a new recruitment plan will be developed for the next academic year.

Increase synchronous, virtual interactions (1) among current students, (2) between department-level administrators and graduate students, (3) between faculty and graduate students, and (4) between alumni and current graduate students.

- There were some additional interactions between students and faculty, including student-to-student interactions and student participation in orientation. The external reviewers recommended developing

more informal communication pathways. The department will work on this during the 2024-2025 academic year.

The Graduate Director and Department Chair will explore the possibility of a 4+1 program for the Sociology Department. If a 4+1 program is feasible, the Sociology Department will seek university approval for such a program.

- The department has worked with CHSS Dean Li to develop an accelerated bachelor's and master's program. The university is examining SACS accreditation regarding some courses counting as both undergraduate and graduate credits. The department will continue to work towards the development of an accelerated bachelor's and master's program during the 2024—2024 academic year.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The external reviewers found the M.A. program in Sociology at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) to be a competitive program with multiple strengths. This includes an engaged, dedicated, hardworking, open, and conscientious faculty; financial support of students through scholarships and assistance; and curriculum flexibility. The report also identified several challenges the M.A. program faces moving forward and provided several recommendations for further strengthening the program. These are: (1) develop an accelerated bachelor's/master's program, (2) engage in active recruitment efforts, (3) streamline the application process, (4) streamline the online student experience and the SHSU online MA program identity, (5) create a more equitable distribution of faculty advising expectations, and (6) more targeted advertising of the program. In the sections below, we outline plans at the departmental level to respond to each of the challenges identified by the external reviewers and further strengthen the M.A. program in Sociology at SHSU. We believe the changes outlined below will further strengthen the Sociology M.A. program in sociology at SHSU and make it a leader among online M.A. sociology programs.

Reviewer Recommendation: Develop an accelerated bachelor's/master's program

The reviewers recommended developing an accelerated bachelor/master's program. Such a program would enable high-performing sociology undergraduates to begin their graduate studies while completing their undergraduate degree. Typically, accelerated programs allow students to count 6-9 graduate credits towards both their undergraduate and graduate degrees. The Sociology Department proposed such a program in Fall 2023. However, currently, SHSU does not have a structure to allow credits to count toward both undergraduate and graduate degrees. As other Texas public universities and SACSOC-accredited schools allow credits to be counted towards undergraduate and graduate degrees, we anticipate SHSU developing a policy that will enable this in the future. Once such a policy is implemented, the Sociology department will develop an accelerated bachelor/master's program.

Reviewer Recommendation: Engage in active recruitment efforts

The reviewers recommend that the department enhance and increase its recruitment efforts. This includes a more refined vision and identity, targeted recruitment, and increased marketing of the program. The department has taken initial steps this year to expand its recruitment efforts. These include recruitment scholarships, a digital marketing campaign, undergraduate alumni recruitment, and webpage restructuring to highlight program strengths. The Department Chair and Graduate Director will work with the newly hired CHSS Marketing and Communications Director to develop a comprehensive recruitment plan. The plan will identify target populations and develop multi-media marketing materials targeting each applicant pool.

Reviewer Recommendation: Streamline the application process

The reviewers recommend streamlining the application process to facilitate more applications to the program and more efficient application review. The Graduate Director and Committee will review the application requirements and consider modifications to simplify them. They will also examine ways to streamline the review process, such as shifting from committee reviews to just a graduate director review for applicants who exceed program requirements.

Reviewer Recommendation: Streamline the online student experience and the SHSU online MA program identity

A. Engage in a comprehensive digital marketing campaign

The reviewers noted that comprehensive digital marketing is pivotal. Reviewers suggested that digital marketing and social media campaigns can allow for targeted marketing, which can be impactful in reaching students considering an online program. Part of this should also include search engine optimization (SEO) analytics to ensure that SHSU is one of the top hits when searching for “Online MA programs in Sociology.” With the support of Integrated Marketing Communication, the department launched its first digital marketing campaign for the sociology graduate program this spring and summer (2024). The department, in conjunction with the CHSS Dean’s Office, will assess the impacts of this effort and refine its digital marketing efforts. If the data indicates that our digital marketing campaign had a positive impact, we will continue to dedicate department funds to support such campaigns.

B. Make the course expectations consistent across courses and across course numbering

Although the reviewers noted that the M.A. courses are rigorous and well organized, they note that there is some inconsistency and incoherence across courses. The reviewers found that both faculty and students expressed that expectations across the various graduate courses were inconsistent, making it challenging for students to know what to anticipate in each course. To improve accessibility and increase student familiarity, the reviewers suggested that the course layout, format, and location of information could be made consistent across courses, which would improve accessibility and increase student familiarity. The graduate committee will review the graduate curriculum, including course expectations, readings, assignments, and structure. The review findings will then serve as the foundation for a discussion among graduate faculty regarding class expectations and structure. Building on these discussions, the graduate committee will develop guidelines for course structure a

C. Create more opportunities for community

The reviewers suggested that graduate students would benefit from a greater sense of community. They noted that one of the chief challenges online programs face is developing a sense of community among graduate students and faculty. While the department has taken actions in the past two years to foster a better sense of community among graduate students (e.g., an organization Blackboard space and the use of social media), the reviewers noted that additional efforts could be undertaken. The department will take several steps to strengthen the sense of community within the graduate program.

D. Create a coherent and consistent message about the vision and identity of the Sociology Graduate Program

The reviewers recommend that the department develop a coherent vision and identity for the M.A. program and develop marketing materials around this vision and identity. The department will revise the program and vision and clearly articulate the program’s identity. Marketing materials will be revised accordingly to highlight the program’s vision and strengthens.

Reviewer Recommendation: Create a more equitable distribution of faculty advising expectations

The reviewers found that the distribution of advising labor is not equal across the faculty, especially for more time-intensive thesis projects. This burden disproportionately falls on specific junior faculty, which is a difficult position for pre-tenure faculty with a 3-3 teaching load. This teaching load is higher than in many other programs that offer MA degrees. They suggested that the department should consider providing incentives in the form of course releases for advising theses. For example, after advising X number of exit projects, the faculty member may be provided with a one-course release. Thus, the faculty will feel they have the time and resources to invest in student success.

Reviewer Recommendation: Continue advertising the relevance of the MA degree

The reviewers recommended that we continue to advertise the program and focus on student outcomes. The department is committed to expanding its outreach, marketing, and recruitment efforts. With a comprehensive marketing and recruitment plan, the department can more effectively advertise the MA program and its strengths.

Department of World Languages and Cultures

American Sign Language Minor

Goal: Establish Cultural Awareness Measure and Benchmark

Goal Description:

WOLC’s Curriculum and Assessment Committee will explore cultural awareness measures for minor students in Deaf Studies. Using peer-reviewed research and best practices for American Sign Language and Deaf culture instruction, the committee will determine appropriate benchmark levels for students in the minor.

Providing Department: American Sign Language Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Cultural Competence and Awareness

Learning Objective Description:

While WOLC's Curriculum and Assessment Committee explores possible measures for evaluating cultural competence and awareness, the department will temporarily assess cultural awareness using a modified version of the Cross-Cultural Competence Inventory (3CI).

Testing Deaf Studies minors using the modified 3CI will help WOLC to establish an appropriate baseline for this newly created minor.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator: Cultural Competence and Awareness

Indicator Description:

Prior to graduation, all graduating minors in Deaf Studies will take the modified 3CI.

Criterion Description:

3CI is a 63-item inventory rated on a 7-point Likert scale. The test is statistically reliable and measures cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of cross-cultural behaviors.

Findings Description:

No DSSL minors completed the 3CI inventory in the 2023-2024 cycle, thus this metric will be moved forward to the next cycle. The WOLC assessment team identified an additional research paper that reported the internal validation procedure for the instrument. This process removed repetitive questions from the originally published inventory; the instrument that we will deploy in the 2024-2025 cycle consists of 46 items (a 27% reduction in length). The team anticipates that this will improve buy-in and compliance with the instrument.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action: Cultural Competence and Awareness

Action Description:

The WOLC assessment team will proceed with the most recent version of this instrument, which reduced the inventory from 63 items to 46 (a 27% reduction in length). The instrument will be converted to a Qualtrics survey that will be deployed to a sample of graduating seniors. Based on the Fall 2025 compliance and outcomes, WOLC will determine the efficacy of expanding the testing pool in both number of students and language learning levels.

Attached Files

 [Finalized CCCI.pdf](#)

Goal: Establish Signed Proficiency Measure and Benchmark

Goal Description:

WOLC’s Curriculum and Assessment Committee will explore language proficiency testing for minor students in Deaf Studies. Using peer-reviewed research and best practices for American Sign Language instruction, the committee will determine appropriate benchmark levels for students in the minor. AVANT language testing has produced a new proficiency assessment that WOLC will pilot as soon as IT@Sam and the SHSU Testing Center make this test available.

Providing Department: American Sign Language Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Signed Proficiency

Learning Objective Description:

AVANT language testing has produced a new proficiency assessment that WOLC will pilot as soon as IT@Sam and the SHSU Testing Center make this test available.

Testing Deaf Studies minors using the AVANT test will help WOLC to establish an appropriate baseline for this minor.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator: Signed Proficiency

Indicator Description:

Prior to graduation, a sample of 10% of graduating minors in Deaf Studies will take the AVANT assessment.

Criterion Description:

AVANT STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) are adaptive, computer-based language proficiency assessments recognized by ACE. STAMP assessments use real-world language samples to evaluate learner language to align with internationally-recognized language proficiency standards.

Findings Description:

Due to extremely long delays in implementation, AVANT STAMP was not available to students during the previous cycle. This measure will be implemented in the next cycle with a sample of graduating seniors.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action: Signed Proficiency

Action Description:

WOLC is THRILLED to report that AVANT STAMP is now an active test available on campus. We will organize assessment of a sample of graduating seniors, and these data will be reported at the end of the 2024-2025 cycle.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

- 1) Pilot test the Cross-Cultural Competence Inventory (3CI) with currently enrolled students to establish a benchmark and begin validating the measure.
- 2) Explore signed language proficiency testing options to replace the cost-prohibitive ASLPI (\$165-\$185 per test)

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

- 1) No DSSL minors completed the 3CI inventory in the 2023-2024 cycle. The assessment team discovered a newer version of the instrument that resulted from extensive internal validation of the 63-item instrument. The department will move forward with testing in the 2024-2025 cycle to establish a baseline and determine appropriate sample size for this instrument.

2) WOLC identified AVANT STAMP's new ASL test as an appropriate testing measure for ASL students. It reduces costs by at least 50%. This test was not implemented in the 2023-2024 cycle due to extremely long delays in implementation of the AVANT testing program.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

After several challenging years for implementing assessment metrics, WOLC is confident that the department will be able to carry out a complete assessment of DSSL minors using the AVANT testing program and the reduced 3CI inventory. WOLC has established three goals for the 2024-2025 cycle for the DSSL minor program:

- Implement assessment of Cultural Competence using the internally validated version of the 3CI.
 - Deploy Qualtrics version of this instrument beginning in Fall 2024. Pending findings from the Fall 2024 assessment, determine whether to expand assessment to a larger pool of students and/or use the instrument to assess other aspects of the DSSL program (e.g., development of Cultural Competence over time, differences between online and in-person courses, etc...).
- Implement assessment of signed proficiency using AVANT testing program.
 - Deploy assessment to a sample of graduating seniors beginning in Fall 2024. Pending the findings from the Fall 2024 assessment, determine whether to expand proficiency assessment to a larger pool of students and/or use the instrument to assess other aspects of the DSSL program (e.g., development of proficiency over time, differences between online and in-person courses, etc...).
- Explore study away program opportunities for proposal in Summer 2025. This will include identifying collaborating institutions where students can be fully immersed in Deaf Culture. While this will not require foreign travel, the program will need to adapt to the needs of the growing DSSL minor population.

French BA

Goal: Language Proficiency

Goal Description:

Students in the BA in French major at SHSU should graduate with Advanced levels of proficiency in oral and written modalities.

Providing Department: French BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Oral Proficiency

Learning Objective Description:

Before graduating, students will demonstrate an Advanced Low level of oral proficiency in the target language system (see descriptors of this level in the Criterion Description below). WOLC selected this benchmark based on the ACTFL guidelines for Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (2015) (see: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLOPITW>).

Attached Files

 [OralProficiencyWorkplacePoster.pdf](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator: Oral Proficiency

Indicator Description:

Prior to graduation, a sample of a minimum of 50% of graduating seniors will take the AVANT STAMP test in the SHSU Testing Center.

Criterion Description:

All students taking the AVANT STAMP will obtain a minimum score of Advanced Low. ACTFL describes this level as follows:

“Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest.

Advanced Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven. They can handle appropriately the essential linguistic challenges presented by a complication or an unexpected turn of events.

Responses produced by Advanced Low speakers are typically not longer than a single paragraph. The speaker’s dominant language may be evident in the use of false cognates, literal translations, or the oral paragraph structure of that language. At times their discourse may be minimal for the level, marked by an irregular flow, and containing noticeable self-correction. More generally, the performance of Advanced Low speakers tends to be uneven.

Advanced Low speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings), but the overall performance of the Advanced-level tasks is sustained, albeit minimally. The vocabulary of Advanced Low speakers often lacks specificity. Nevertheless, Advanced Low speakers are able to use communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution.

Advanced Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. Their speech can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may require some repetition or restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly.

Findings Description:

Due to extremely long delays in implementation, AVANT STAMP was not available to students during the previous cycle. This measure will be implemented in the next cycle with a sample of graduating seniors.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action: Oral Proficiency

Action Description:

WOLC is THRILLED to report that AVANT STAMP is now an active test available on campus. We will organize assessment of a sample of graduating seniors, and these data will be reported at the end of the 2024-2025 cycle.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Written Proficiency

Learning Objective Description:

Before graduating, students will demonstrate an Advanced Low level of written proficiency in the target language system (see descriptors of this level below). WOLC selected this benchmark to coincide with the ACTFL guidelines for Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (2015) (see: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLOPITW>)

“Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to meet basic work and/or academic writing needs. They demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in major time frames with some control of aspect. They are able to compose simple summaries on familiar topics. Advanced Low writers are able to combine and link sentences into texts of paragraph length and structure. Their writing, while adequate to satisfy the criteria of the Advanced level, may not be substantive. Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel demonstrate the ability to incorporate a limited number of cohesive devices, and may resort to some redundancy and awkward repetition. They rely on patterns of oral discourse and the writing style of their first language. These writers demonstrate minimal control of common structures and vocabulary associated with the Advanced level. Their writing is understood by natives not accustomed to the writing of non-natives, although some additional effort may be required in the reading of the text. When attempting to perform functions at the Superior level, their writing will deteriorate significantly. (find more information here: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLWriting>)

Attached Files

 [OralProficiencyWorkplacePoster.pdf](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator: Written Proficiency

Indicator Description:

WOLC will review instruments that measure students' written proficiency in French.

Criterion Description:

WOLC will gather French written proficiency measures and explore their utility and feasibility for measuring learner progress at SHSU.

Findings Description:

WOLC's meta-analysis of commercially available writing tests indicates that the AVANT testing program will include the best instruments for assessing the language proficiency of graduating FREN majors. In addition to high quality testing, the AVANT program combines language skills on a single instrument and the company will provide access to detailed testing outcomes.

Action: Written Proficiency

Action Description:

WOLC is THRILLED to report that AVANT STAMP is now an active test available on campus.

We will organize assessment of a sample of graduating seniors, and these data will be reported at the end of the 2024-2025 cycle.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

- Continue recruitment to French minor and upper-level courses
- Propose Study Abroad program in French
- Identify and/or develop written proficiency instrument to track student development
- Explore accreditation process for French K-12 Teaching Certification

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

- Despite the departure of one of the FREN faculty in Summer 2024, the program remains robust due to the ongoing efforts of the program coordinator. The program coordinator has successfully recruited a growing number of students to the FREN minor from the population of FREN 1411-2312 students.
- Program coordinator re-launched Sam in France with 9 students who spent four weeks in Aix-en-Provence. These students all continued enrollment in the FREN minor, demonstrating the effectiveness of study abroad as a recruitment tool for language minors.
- WOLC's meta-analysis of commercially available written proficiency instrument indicate that the AVANT testing program will be the best resource for valid and reliable instruments. Now that AVANT is available on campus, the department can begin its testing program of graduating seniors during the 2024-2025 assessment cycle.
- WOLC did not have adequate time to explore the accreditation process for FREN K-12 Teaching Certification in Texas. This goal will roll forward to the 2024-2025 assessment cycle.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

After several challenging years for implementing assessment metrics, WOLC is confident that the department will be able to carry out a complete assessment of FREN major. WOLC has established the following goals for this program:

- Implement assessment of Cultural Competence using the internally validated version of the 3CI.
 - Deploy Qualtrics version of this instrument beginning in Fall 2024. Pending findings from the Fall 2024 assessment, determine whether to expand assessment to a larger pool of students and/or use the instrument to assess other aspects of the FREN program (e.g., development of Cultural Competence over time, etc...).
- Implement assessment of oral and written proficiencies using AVANT testing program.
 - Deploy assessment to a sample of graduating seniors beginning in Fall 2024. Pending the findings from the Fall 2024 assessment, determine whether to expand proficiency assessment to a larger pool of students and/or use the instrument to assess other aspects of the FREN program (e.g., development of proficiency over time, etc...).
- Propose and carry out Sam in France 2025, integrating lessons learned from challenges experienced in 2024. This includes creating a curriculum that does not unintentionally reduce enrollments in FREN coursework during subsequent semesters.
- Explore accreditation of French K-12 teachers in Texas to determine whether this is a possible avenue for students in the French program. This exploration will include a job market analysis as well as

alternative certification pathways.

Spanish BA

Goal ALL majors: Language Proficiency

Goal Description:

The BA in Spanish at SHSU targets two student populations: 1) pre-service teachers seeking certification to teach Spanish in Texas public schools and 2) students who wish to earn a BA without seeking teacher certification. Students in both degree tracks should graduate with high levels of proficiency in oral and written modalities. In addition to demonstrating oral and written proficiency, teacher candidates must pass the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Spanish exam, which includes discipline-specific measures of language proficiency (see attached guidelines).

Attached Files

 [613PrepManual.pdf](#)

 [ch114c TEKS.pdf](#)

Providing Department: Spanish BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective ALL majors: Oral Proficiency

Learning Objective Description:

Before graduating, students will demonstrate an Advanced Low level of oral proficiency in the target language system (see descriptors of this level in the Criterion Description below). WOLC selected this benchmark based on the ACTFL guidelines for Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (2015) (see: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLOPITW>).

Attached Files

 [OralProficiencyWorkplacePoster.pdf](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator ALL majors: Oral Proficiency

Indicator Description:

Prior to graduation, a sample of a minimum of 50% of graduating seniors (to include ALL teacher candidates) will take the AVANT STAMP test in the SHSU Testing Center.

Criterion Description:

All major students taking the AVANT STAMP will obtain a minimum score of Advanced Low. ACTFL describes this level as follows:

“Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest.

Advanced Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven. They can handle appropriately the essential linguistic challenges presented by a complication or an unexpected turn of events.

Responses produced by Advanced Low speakers are typically not longer than a single paragraph. The speaker’s dominant language may be evident in the use of false cognates, literal translations, or the oral paragraph structure of that language. At times their discourse may be minimal for the level, marked by an irregular flow, and containing noticeable self-correction. More generally, the performance of Advanced Low speakers tends to be uneven.

Advanced Low speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings), but the overall performance of the Advanced-level tasks is sustained, albeit minimally. The vocabulary of Advanced Low speakers often lacks specificity. Nevertheless, Advanced Low speakers are able to use communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution.

Advanced Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. Their speech can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may require some repetition or restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly.

Findings Description:

Due to extremely long delays in implementation, AVANT STAMP was not available to students during the previous cycle. This measure will be implemented in the next cycle with a sample of graduating seniors.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action ALL majors: Oral Proficiency

Action Description:

WOLC is THRILLED to report that AVANT STAMP is now an active test available on campus. We will organize assessment of a sample of graduating seniors, and these data will be reported at the end of the 2024-2025 cycle.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective ALL majors: Written Proficiency

Learning Objective Description:

Before graduating, students will demonstrate an Advanced Low level of written proficiency in the target language system (see descriptors of this level below). WOLC selected this benchmark to coincide with the ACTFL guidelines for Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (2015) (see: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLOPITW>)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator ALL majors: Written Proficiency

Indicator Description:

WOLC is reviewing instruments that will measure students' written proficiency. We have gathered widely recognized sample instruments, including the ACTFL Written Proficiency Test, Avant Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP), and Diplomas de Español como lengua extranjera (*Diplomas of Spanish as a Foreign Language*, DELE).

Criterion Description:

Before graduating, students will demonstrate an Advanced Low level of written proficiency in the target language system (see descriptors of this level below). WOLC selected this benchmark to coincide with the ACTFL guidelines for Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (2015) (see: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLOPITW>)

“Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to meet basic work and/or academic writing needs. They demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in major time frames with some control of aspect. They are able to compose simple summaries on familiar topics. Advanced Low writers are able to combine and link sentences into texts of paragraph length and structure. Their writing, while adequate to satisfy the criteria of the Advanced level, may not be substantive. Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel demonstrate the ability to incorporate a limited number of cohesive devices, and may resort to some redundancy and awkward repetition. They rely on patterns of oral discourse and the writing style of their first language. These writers demonstrate minimal control of common structures and vocabulary associated with the Advanced level. Their writing is understood by natives not accustomed to the writing of non-natives, although some additional effort may be required in the reading of the text. When attempting to perform functions at the Superior level, their writing will deteriorate significantly. (find more information here: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLWriting>)

Attached Files

 [OralProficiencyWorkplacePoster.pdf](#)

Findings Description:

WOLC's meta-analysis of commercially available writing tests indicates that the AVANT testing program will include the best instruments for assessing the language proficiency of graduating SPAN majors. In addition to high quality testing, the AVANT program combines language skills on a single instrument and the company will provide access to detailed testing outcomes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action ALL majors: Written Proficiency

Action Description:

WOLC is THRILLED to report that AVANT STAMP is now an active test available on campus. We will organize assessment of a sample of graduating seniors, and these data will be reported at the end of the 2024-2025 cycle.

Goal: Teacher Certification Preparation

Goal Description:

WOLC will work with the School of Teaching and Learning to prepare teacher candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to earn Texas EC-12 Certification in Spanish.

Providing Department: Spanish BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective TCP1: Incorporation of Language Acquisition Theories in Instructional Practices and Assessment

Learning Objective Description:

- 1)Teacher candidates will demonstrate their understanding of theories of language acquisition at various phases of development and use this knowledge to create a supportive learning environment that includes target language input and opportunities for negotiating meaningful interaction.
- 2)Teacher candidates will demonstrate a variety of instructional practices that reflect language outcomes and articulated program model

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator TCP1: Incorporation of Language Acquisition Theories in Instructional Practices and Assessment

Indicator Description:

Spanish teacher candidates will be assessed by their performance on the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs* and *Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning from the Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* (see rubrics here: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLCAEP>).

Attached Files

 [ACTFLCAEPStandards2013_v2015.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

Prior to graduation, all teacher candidate students will be observed during their teaching internship and evaluated using the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs* and *Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning*. These domains include the following competencies:

- Demonstrate an understanding of key principles of language acquisition and create linguistically and culturally rich learning environments.

- Demonstrate an understanding of child and adolescent development to create a supportive learning environment for each student.
- Design and use ongoing authentic performance assessments using a variety of assessment models for all learners, including diverse students.
- Reflect on and analyze the results of student assessments, adjust instruction accordingly, and use data to inform and strengthen subsequent instruction.
- Interpret and report the results of student performances to all stakeholders in the community, with particular emphasis on building student responsibility for their own learning.

Findings Description:

All teacher candidates met the appropriate benchmark, meaning that they received overall *acceptable* scores on on the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs* and *Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning*. The scale for this instrument is: *unacceptable, acceptable, target*. It is widely recognized that the *target* rating is achieved only by teachers with multiple years of instructional experience; therefore, *acceptable* is an appropriate benchmark.

To achieve a score of *acceptable* means that a student clearly demonstrates their knowledge in the following pedagogical domains:

- principles of language acquisition
- child and adolescent development
- real-world applications of assessment measures
- implications and applications of assessment data
- communication with stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, administrators, community)

Therefore, an *acceptable* rating for integration of standards into their teaching practice requires candidates to marry their knowledge of pedagogy with their understanding of national standards. The instrument used to evaluate teacher candidates is identical to that used to evaluate in-service teachers. Thus the *acceptable* rating is a reliable indicator of future success.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action TCP1: Incorporation of Language Acquisition Theories in Instructional Practices and Assessment

Action Description:

WOLC will retain this indicator as teacher candidate performance on ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs* and *Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning* is a reliable indicator of candidate pedagogical knowledge and of future success.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective TCP2: Integration of Standards in Curriculum And Instruction

Learning Objective Description:

- 1) Teacher candidates will demonstrate an understanding of the goal areas and standards of the ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Languages Other Than English (LOTE).
- 2) Teacher candidates will integrate these standards into curricular planning and language instruction.
- 3) Teacher candidates will use standards and curricular goals to evaluate, select, design, and adapt instructional resources.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator TCP2.1: Integration of Standards in Curriculum and Instruction

Indicator Description:

Spanish teacher candidates will be assessed by their performance on *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment* of the TExES LOTE Representative Exam.

Criterion Description:

Prior to graduation, all teacher candidate students will take the LOTE Representative and score 80% or higher for *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment*. This domain includes the following competencies:

- The LOTE teacher knows and understands language-learning theories and theories of second-language acquisition and their application to LOTE instruction and assessment to promote the learning goals defined in the TEKS for LOTE and promote all students' success as language learners.
- The LOTE teacher understands and applies theories, strategies and practices of second-language instruction and assessment to promote students' progress in all areas of language learning as defined in the TEKS for LOTE.

The LOTE teacher understands and applies strategies and approaches for implementing the TEKS for LOTE to promote students' ability to communicate in the target language, gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures, connect with other disciplines and acquire information, make comparisons that develop insight into the nature of language and culture and participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world.

Findings Description:

All teacher candidates met the appropriate benchmark, meaning that they all scored higher than 80% on *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment*. This remains an excellent metric for measuring teacher candidate preparedness in this area.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action TCP2.1: Integration of Standards in Curriculum and Instruction

Action Description:

WOLC will retain this indicator as teacher candidate performance on *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment* of the *TExES LOTE Representative Exam* is a reliable indicator of future success on the TExES LOTE 613 exam, which is a requirement for Spanish Teacher Certification in the State of Texas. It also indicates that candidates have the requisite knowledge to teach Spanish in K-12 programs.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator TCP2.2: Integration of Standards in Curriculum and Instruction

Indicator Description:

Spanish teacher candidates will be assessed by their performance on the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 4: Integration of Standards in Planning and Instruction* from the Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (see rubrics here: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLCAEP>).

Attached Files

 [ACTFLCAEPStandards2013_v2015.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

Prior to graduation, all teacher candidate students will be observed during their teaching internship and evaluated using the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 4: Integration of Standards in Planning and Instruction*. This domain includes the following competencies:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century or their recently refreshed version World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (2015) and their state standards and use them as the basis for instructional planning.
- Integrate the goal areas of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century or their recently refreshed version World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (2015) and their state standards in their classroom practice.

Use the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century or their recently refreshed version World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (2015) and their state standards to select and integrate authentic texts, use technology, and adapt and create instructional materials for use in communication.

Findings Description:

All teacher candidates met the appropriate benchmark, meaning that they received overall *acceptable* scores on the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 4: Integration of Standards in Planning and Instruction*. The scale for this instrument is: *unacceptable, acceptable, target*. It is widely recognized that the *target* rating is achieved only by teachers with multiple years of instructional experience; therefore, *acceptable* is an appropriate benchmark.

To achieve a score of *acceptable* means that a student clearly demonstrates their ability to integrate national standards for language education with recognized proficiency benchmarks while covering district-established topics. The *ACTFL World-Readiness Standards* include effective communication, cultural competence, diverse interdisciplinary perspectives, effective cultural and linguistic comparison skills, and community participation. Proficiency benchmarks indicate how students should be able to use language at varying levels. For example, a Novice Low student should be able to exchange greetings and name familiar objects, while an Advanced High student should be able to narrate accurately across time frames and compensate for vocabulary limitations.

Therefore, an *acceptable* rating for integration of standards into lesson plans requires teacher candidates to marry the above-mentioned standards with level-appropriate grammar and vocabulary while also meeting district requirements. The instrument used to evaluate teacher candidates is identical to that used to evaluate in-service teachers. Thus the *acceptable* rating is a reliable indicator of future success.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action TCP2.2: Integration of Standards in Curriculum and Instruction

Action Description:

WOLC will retain this indicator as teacher candidate performance on ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 4: Integration of Standards in Planning and Instruction* is a reliable indicator of future success and a candidate's ability to complete essential language teacher tasks.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective TCP3: Teacher Candidate Professionalism

Learning Objective Description:

- 1)Teacher Candidates will engage in professional development opportunities that strengthen their own linguistic and cultural competence and promote reflection on practice.
- 2)Teacher Candidates will know the value of foreign language learning in overall student success and will embrace their role as advocates with students and their parents, colleagues, and community stakeholders to promote the field.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator TCP3: Teacher Candidate Professionalism

Indicator Description:

Prior to graduation, all teacher candidates will give a Capstone presentation that targets the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 2: Cultures, Linguistics, Literatures, and Concepts from Other Disciplines* and *Standard 6: Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics* (see rubrics here: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLCAEP>)

Attached Files

 [ACTFLCAEPStandards2013_v2015.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

Prior to graduation, all teacher candidates will give a Capstone presentation that targets the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 2: Cultures, Linguistics, Literatures, and Concepts from Other Disciplines* and *Standard 6: Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics*. A panel of WOLC faculty in Spanish will use the ACTFL CAEP rubric to assess students' performance. The domains included in the Capstone include the following competencies:

- Demonstrate target cultural understandings and compare cultures through perspectives, products, and practices of those cultures.
- Demonstrate understanding of linguistics and the changing nature of language, and compare language systems.
- Demonstrate understanding of texts on literary and cultural themes as well as interdisciplinary topics.
- Engage in ongoing professional development opportunities that strengthen their own linguistic, cultural and pedagogical competence and promote reflection on practice.
- Articulate the role and value of languages and cultures in preparing all students to interact in the global community of the 21st century through collaboration and advocacy with all stakeholders.
- Use inquiry and reflection to understand and explain the opportunities and responsibilities inherent in being a professional language educator and demonstrate a commitment to equitable and ethical interactions with all students, colleagues and other stakeholders.

Findings Description:

All teacher candidates met the appropriate benchmark, meaning that they received overall *acceptable* scores on the ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 2: Cultures, Linguistics, Literatures, and Concepts from Other Disciplines* and *Standard 6: Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics*. These rubrics are used to evaluate capstone projects from graduating teacher candidates in which they give a presentation and submit a plan for ongoing professional development. The presentation includes the following topics:

- Cultural understanding through perspectives, products, and practices
- Linguistics and the changing nature of language
- Analysis of literary/cultural and interdisciplinary texts
- Value of linguistic and cultural understanding in an increasingly interconnected world

To receive an *acceptable* score on these two rubrics, teacher candidates must give a culturally appropriate presentation on a topic that requires inquiry and reflection. The presentation must be respectful and accurate, and must end with an advocacy statement that addresses the importance of language education. The plan for professional development must include discipline-specific and general pedagogical activities.

Therefore, an *acceptable* rating for cultures, linguistics, literatures, and concepts from other disciplines and professional development, advocacy, and ethics, requires candidates to demonstrate their cultural competence, knowledge of linguistics, textual analysis skills, and abilities to engage in inquiry and reflection. Candidates must also demonstrate their familiarity with professional development needs. The instrument used to evaluate teacher candidates is identical to that used to evaluate in-service teachers. Thus the *acceptable* rating is a reliable indicator of future success.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action TCP3: Teacher Candidate Professionalism

Action Description:

WOLC will retain this indicator as teacher candidate performance on ACTFL/CAEP rubric *Standard 2: Cultures, Linguistics, Literatures, and Concepts from Other Disciplines* and *Standard 6: Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics* is a reliable indicator of future success and a candidate's understanding of essential aspects of the language teaching profession.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

1. Integrate the Spanish BA with WOLC BA.

2. Complete ongoing analysis of online vs face-to-face instruction in the 2023-2024 cycle. This will include an expanded pilot test of Time2Talk and a plan for piloting new course modalities.
3. Collect a larger sample of pre- and post-study abroad experiences (culture, attitudes, language) in Costa Rica to ensure statistically reliable outcome measures for program development.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

In addition to retaining measures related to Teaching Candidates and piloting the AVANT testing program for all majors and minors, WOLC proposed three goals in the 2023-2024 plan for continuous improvement. These goals were not completed, but they have been revised to reflect current department needs.

1. The WOLC BA has been delayed, but will be proposed during the 2024-2025 cycle. The proposal has undergone significant revisions since discussions first began, and the WOLC Curriculum Team has ensured that students will be able to recognize and articulate the value of language education and cultural competence. The team has also ensured that Spanish teaching candidates will be better served by the courses offered under the WOLC BA program.
2. Unfortunately, Time2Talk closed its doors in Fall 2023, thus this goal had to be revised. WOLC will pilot test similar authentic communication services to improve outcomes for online language students. This will serve Spanish language students, but we will also seek programs that include other languages in our department.
3. WOLC did not launch study abroad success metrics this year, relying instead on student self-reporting of experiences. We will use these self-reports to inform our metrics for Summer 2025 study abroad assessment measures.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

In addition to retaining measures related to Teaching Candidates and piloting the AVANT testing program for all majors and minors, WOLC proposes the following goals in the 2024-2025 plan for continuous improvement. These may be revised during the cycle, depending on department and student needs.

1. Finalize WOLC BA proposal and prepare for launch.
2. Begin process of proposing 4+1 program for Spanish BA to MA.
3. Include Cultural Competence measure to accompany language proficiency.

Spanish MA

Goal: Demonstration Of Breadth Of Knowledge

Goal Description:

Spanish MA students will demonstrate their graduate-level of knowledge in literature, language, and linguistics. Graduate-level knowledge gives students the ability to teach and/or clearly communicate what they have learned through their focused study in the discipline.

Providing Department: Spanish MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Breadth Of Knowledge

Learning Objective Description:

Spanish MA students will demonstrate their graduate-level knowledge through comprehensive written exams demonstrating their ability to clearly communicate what they have learned through their program of study. Students whose dominant language is not Spanish will demonstrate their Advanced High Oral Communication skills on the AVANT STAMP assessment.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 1: Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description:

During their last semester of study, Spanish MA students will demonstrate their graduate-level knowledge through written comprehensive exams in three subject areas of their choosing. Students select these areas from their MA coursework and work with faculty to develop a reading list and exam questions.

Criterion Description:

All Spanish MA students will achieve a score of Pass or High Pass on their written comprehensive exams during their final semester of study.

Findings Description:

All students achieved a *Pass* score on their written comprehensive exams during their final semester of study. These exams represent student knowledge of their coursework and allows them to demonstrate discipline-specific skills. WOLC has discussed replacing MA exams with a capstone project or portfolio that would be of more utility for graduating students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action 1: Breadth of Knowledge

Action Description:

WOLC faculty will determine whether to continue using MA exams as a final assessment or if it would be more fruitful to require students to submit a capstone project or portfolio. Faculty will reach out to colleagues in other departments and at other institutions for feedback about this possibility.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 2: Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description:

Prior to graduation, Spanish MA students whose dominant language is not Spanish will take the AVANT STAMP and obtain a minimum score of Advanced High. WOLC selected this benchmark based on the ACTFL guidelines for Oral Proficiency Levels in the Workplace (2015) (see: <https://bit.ly/ACTFLOPITW>).

Attached Files

 [OralProficiencyWorkplacePoster.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

All students taking the OPI-C will obtain a minimum score of Advanced High. ACTFL describes this level as follows:

“Speakers at the Advanced High sublevel perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence, and competence. They are consistently able to explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. In addition, Advanced High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Superior level but cannot sustain performance at that level across a variety of topics. They may provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise, but in general, they are more comfortable discussing a variety of topics concretely.

Advanced High speakers may demonstrate a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms or for limitations in vocabulary by the confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration. They use precise vocabulary and intonation to express meaning and often show great fluency and ease of speech. However, when called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language will at times break down or prove inadequate, or they may avoid the task altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypothesis.

Findings Description:

The first language of all graduating students was Spanish, thus no testing was necessary.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action 2: Breadth of Knowledge

Action Description:

WOLC will retain this measure for students whose first language is not Spanish.

Goal: Graduate Student Scholarship

Goal Description:

Graduate-level study will give students essential professional scholarly knowledge and skills.

Providing Department: Spanish MA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Learning Objective: Graduate Student Scholarship

Learning Objective Description:

Through a deliberate admissions process and faculty-student research collaboration, the MA Spanish program will give students essential professional and scholarly knowledge and skills.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 1: Graduate Student Scholarship

Indicator Description:

The Spanish Graduate Faculty revised admissions criteria to more accurately reflect program content and goals. Prior to admission, graduate faculty evaluate students’ prior coursework (minimum of 18 hours undergraduate Spanish), undergraduate GPA, writing in Spanish and English, and students’ letters of recommendation from academic and professional sources. The student application package reflects these criteria; students must submit writing samples in Spanish and English and must provide letters of recommendation from academic and professional mentors. Application packages are evaluated using the attached rubric.

Attached Files

 [Admission Rubric Spanish MA.pdf](#)

Criterion Description:

All students admitted to the Spanish MA program will meet minimum criteria for program admission or will have a clear remediation plan in place prior to admission.

Findings Description:

All students were minimally qualified for the MA program. Despite this, WOLC faculty have noted a decrease in student quality and dedication following admission. The department will review admissions requirements and standards to determine whether a change in procedure or policy is necessary.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action 1: Graduate Student Scholarship

Action Description:

Due to a decrease in student quality and dedication following admission, WOLC will review admissions requirements and standards to determine whether a change in procedure or policy is necessary.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Indicator 2: Graduate Student Scholarship

Indicator Description:

WOLC will build a program of regular graduate student external scholarly activity.

Criterion Description:

Each academic year, at least 1 graduate student will collaborate with faculty to prepare a scholarly project for submission to a peer-reviewed conference, publication venue, or grant agency.

Findings Description:

No graduate students were interested in collaboration during this cycle. This may be a reflection on what WOLC faculty noted with respect to admitted students. That is, faculty have noticed a decrease in student quality and dedication despite an increase in admissions standards. WOLC will continue to pursue this activity in the next cycle.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Indicator 2: Graduate Student Scholarship

Action Description:

WOLC will continue to invite graduate student collaboration in faculty scholarship while simultaneously addressing the issues related to student quality and dedication.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

- 1) Revise current Spanish MA program to be a fully online WOLC MA program oriented to building professional language skills.
- 2) Continue to survey school districts, teachers, and current/future MA students to tailor curriculum and program development.
- 3) Continue direct recruitment in Houston-area schools and at campus events to increase enrollment

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

In addition to retaining measures related to student breadth of knowledge and scholarship, WOLC proposed three goals in the 2023-2024 plan for continuous improvement. These goals were not met, but they were revised to reflect current department needs.

1. MA Spanish program revisions were delayed until the WOLC BA has been proposed. Once the WOLC BA has been proposed, the WOLC curriculum team will expand its work to the WOLC MA and will include a 4+1 proposal.
2. The department surveyed current MA students to understand curriculum needs and tailor program development. The department will reach out to school districts and active teachers with a survey about

their skill needs in the 2024-2025 cycle.

3. WOLC will appoint a MA committee to ensure that recruitment activities align with curriculum proposals.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

1. Explore 4+1 WOLC BA/MA once BA proposal is completed.
2. Survey current MA students to understand curriculum needs and tailor program development.
3. Contact school districts and active teachers with a survey about their skill needs in the 2024-2025 cycle.
4. Appoint a MA committee to ensure that recruitment activities align with curriculum proposals.
5. Assess cultural competence in graduating MA students.