

Meta-assessment Analysis Report for the College of
Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS)

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Please return the completed report back to the Office of Assessment by

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Assessment is an important best practice in higher education that helps programs determine whether key objectives are being met, identify areas for improvement, and develop actions to improve program effectiveness. Additionally, meaningful and effective assessment is the cornerstone of many discipline-specific accreditations, as well as SHSU's regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Meta-assessment is an important tool for helping ensure that all programs at Sam Houston State University engage in a meaningful and effective continuous improvement assessment process.

Meta-assessment serves two important roles for the College and the University. First, it provides valuable feedback to units regarding ways in which they may continue to improve their annual assessment processes. Second, it provides College and University leaders with a way to observe the overall quality of assessment processes for their units. The purpose of this report is to detail the meta-assessment process carried out by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), the College's plan for distributing the completed meta-assessment rubrics to their departments and programs, the assessment strengths observed within the reviewed assessment plans, the areas for improvement for future assessment practices, the strategies for implementing those improvements, and the training or resources needed to implement those strategies.

Section 1: Description of Meta-assessment Methodology Employed by the College

Detail the College's meta-assessment methodology and process. Include a description of who was involved (e.g., a committee of senior faculty or college administrators), your methodology for evaluating unit-level assessment plans, steps for ensuring reliability, and your timeline.

This year, CHSS again set out with the goal to continue improving the overall meta-assessment exercise. As such, CHSS has continued to revise its meta-assessment methodology, which has resulted in important changes to both assessment and meta-assessment processes. These changes are designed to make the process more time-efficient and to improve overall effectiveness. To achieve this goal, CHSS implemented the following changes in the meta-assessment process:

- 1) CHSS has maintained an established statistical model for assessment that incorporates interrater reliability.
- 2) As in the previous cycle, CHSS reviewed approximately 1/3 of the assessment plans in the college. Therefore, CHSS has now completed a full review of all departments and programs in the college. The college has found that this method streamlines the assessment process and reduces the burden on assessors on whose expertise CHSS relies for reliable program and department evaluation.
- 3) Therefore, CHSS assessed a total of 13 units, including graduate programs, a bachelor's program, bachelor's minor programs, and certificates (see Tables 1 and 2 below).
- 4) To conduct the 2022-2023 meta-analysis, CHSS Leadership selected three expert raters from the college. These raters have qualitative and quantitative assessment experience in their own disciplines. The assessors also have extensive experience applying their knowledge in a variety of higher education contexts.
- 5) The official meta-assessment was conducted over a two-week period from February 1 – February 15, 2024. CHSS asked reviewers to track the time that they spent reviewing each

plan. On average, the reviewers spent approximately 30 minutes per assessment plan (approximately 9 hours per reviewer). Using Office of Assessment's revised rubric, two assessors anonymously reviewed each plan. They reached an initial interrater reliability rate of 0.89 for each category. Working together with a third expert reviewer, nearly all inconsistencies were resolved with a final interrater reliability rate of 0.96, thus demonstrating that a high level of agreement between assessors was achieved for all ratings assigned across rubric categories. CHSS used this methodology to ensure that assessment plans were not only reviewed in depth but also carefully discussed in terms of the actual criteria in the Office of Assessment rubrics (2023).

- 6) CHSS will continue to have an internal CHSS deadline of June 15 for inputting all assessment elements. As a result, summer meta-assessment will yield feedback that is actionable before established Office of Assessment deadlines at the end of Fall Semester.

Section 2: Plan for Distributing Completed Rubrics to Units

Detail the College's plan for sharing the completed meta-assessment rubrics with its departments and programs.

CHSS leadership (department chairs, associate deans, and dean) will each receive a copy of this meta-assessment summary report. Department chairs will also receive the completed rubrics for each plan under their supervision. Similarly, the faculty member charged with assessment of a reviewed unit will receive both the summary and the completed rubrics for that plan.

Section 3: Observed Strengths within College Assessment Plans

Detail the general strengths identified by the College after reviewing its units' assessment plans. What general aspects of the annual assessment processes are units mastering? Are there any units that you would recommend serve as exemplary models?

Below, Tables 1 and 2 provide a quantitative summary of the results. All CHSS plans evaluated in the March 2024 meta-assessment cycle are listed for reference. Table 1 presents scores by department while Table 2 presents scores by category (i.e., department, undergraduate, and graduate).

Scores are the numerical average of raters' assessments according to the scale below.

- 1 – Developing
- 2 – Minimally Compliant
- 3 – Good
- 4 – Exemplary

DEPARTMENTS / PROGRAMS	Goals Avg	Objective Avg	Indicator / KPI Avg	Criterion / Target Avg	Findings Avg	Actions Avg	Update Avg	PCI Avg	Overall Avg
English Department									
American Studies Minor	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.5
App Ethics and Critical Thinking	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Creative Writing Minor	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Technical Communication Minor	3.0	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.5	3.0	2.0
Integrated Studies BS	3.0	3.5	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	4.0	4.0
Political Science Department									
Legal Studies Minor	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
Public Admin & Public Policy Minor	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.5	2.5	4.0
Psychology and Philosophy Department									
Ethics Minor	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Clinical Psychology MA	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
School Psychology SSP	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Sociology Department									
Community Leadership Minor	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
World Languages & Cultures Department									
German Minor	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
Latin American & Latinx Studies Minor	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
<i>Combined average</i>	3.12	2.77	2.81	3.04	2.54	2.62	2.85	2.96	2.96

Table 1. CHSS 2024 Meta-Assessment Scores by Department (All Units). Scores are the average of expert raters’ assessment after interrater reliability discussions.

DEPARTMENTS / PROGRAMS	Goals Avg	Objective Avg	Indicator / KPI Avg	Criterion / Target Avg	Findings Avg	Actions Avg	Update Avg	PCI Avg	Overall Avg
English Department									
American Studies Minor	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.5
App Ethics and Critical Thinking	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Creative Writing Minor	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Technical Communication Minor	3.0	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.5	3.0	2.0
<i>English Average</i>	2.13	1.38	1.13	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.38	1.75	1.38
Integrated Studies BS	3.0	3.5	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	4.0	4.0
Political Science Department									
Legal Studies Minor	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
Public Admin & Public Policy Minor	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	2.5	2.5	4.0
Psychology and Philosophy Department									
Ethics Minor	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Clinical Psychology MA	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
School Psychology SSP	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Sociology Department									
Community Leadership Minor	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
World Languages & Cultures Department									
German Minor	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
Latin American & Latinx Studies Minor	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
<i>Combined average</i>	3.56	3.39	3.56	3.94	3.22	3.33	3.50	3.50	3.67

Table 2. CHSS 2024 Meta-Assessment Scores by Department (Separate Scores for English Department). Scores are the average of expert raters' assessment after interrater reliability discussions.

In our analysis, we discovered that the assessment plans for programs that fall under the umbrella of the English Department are statistical outliers, falling more than one standard deviation point below that of the combined departments. In particular, the overall ratings for English ranged from 1.0-2.1, indicating that assessment plans continue to reflect developmental stages. In contrast, the ratings for all other combined units range from 3.2-3.9 (\approx Good to \approx Exemplary). As such, it is essential that assessment plan writers in the English department receive additional training on best practices for creating effective assessment plans. To this end, it is recommended that the Department Chair work with the Office of Assessment and department assessment writers to arrange this training.

The remainder of this report focuses on scores for the five remaining units and their constituents. The highest scoring components across these programs and departments were Goals (3.56; \approx Good), Indicators (3.56; \approx Good), and Criterion (3.94; \approx Exemplary). The average overall score was 3.67 (\approx Good, approaching Exemplary). This indicates that assessment coordinators have a solid understanding of program assessment as required in Anthology. The assessment plan for the Ethics minor housed in Philosophy stands out as an exemplary plan, and in fact could be used for a successful template for other units in the college. Additionally, the two graduate degree plans under review this cycle (i.e., Clinical Psychology MA and School Psychology SSP) are also exemplary. This reflects not only the skill of plan writers, but also may reflect the applied focus of these degree plans, which requires the units to meet accreditation or other certification requirements.

Section 4: Observed Areas for Improvement within College Assessment Plans

Detail the general areas for improvement identified by the College after reviewing its units' assessment plans. What general aspects of the annual assessment process are units struggling with?

The primary area for improvement for the assessment plans evaluated in this cycle lies with the already noted deficiencies in plans from the Department of English. For the remaining units, lower scores in Findings (3.22) and Actions (3.33) indicate that, while the average rating is \approx Good, assessment plan writers could provide additional detail in these areas to further improve these ratings. Meta-assessment ratings for Objectives (3.39), Update to Previous Cycle's PCI (3.50), and New PCI (3.50), reveal additional areas where plan writers could easily increase their Good scores to Exemplary by providing additional contextual details.

Section 5: Strategies Needed to Address Identified Areas for Improvement

Detail the College's strategies for addressing the general areas for improvement identified after reviewing its units' assessment plans.

As noted above, the English Department will need to coordinate with the Office of Assessment for assistance in developing compliant assessment plans. In other units, assessment plan writers who would like to further improve already Good plans may choose to request permission to review Exemplary plans.

Section 6: Training/Resources Needed to Implement the College's Improvement Strategy

Detail the types of training and resources that would assist the College with implementing its improvement strategies.

Over the next few assessment cycles, all plans will ultimately need to reflect and report on elements of SHSU's and CHSS's new strategic plans. To this end, in addition to workshops provided at the University level, the college will encourage collaborative working sessions to ensure that all assessment plans clearly articulate CHSS's critical contributions to SHSU's success. This open exchange of assessment ideas will undoubtedly foster interdisciplinary evaluation, increase practical application of assessment measures, and even improve weaker assessment plans.