Geography BA

GOAL 2: Train students to have a strong foundation in Human Geography

Goal Description:

Students will be able to fully comprehend and apply concepts from their human/cultural geography courses

Providing Department: Geography BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Advanced Human Geography Concepts (Goal 2b)

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate proficiency with advanced concepts pertaining to human geography.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Advanced Human Geography Concepts

Indicator Description:

Questions pertaining to advanced concepts of human geography will be embedded in advanced geography courses (GEOG 3310, 3350, 3352, 3359, 4351, 4356, and 4357)

Criterion Description:

The average score will be 70% on questions pertaining to advanced human geography

Findings Description:

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 60% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to advanced concepts in human geography. Students enrolled in GEOG 3350 (cultural geography) averaged 73% on a separate series of such questions. Students enrolled in GEOG 4360 (cultural field studies) scored 74% on questions pertaining to this subject area. The scores for both GEOG 1300 and 3350 increased slightly from the previous year's assessment, and were basically equivalent to scores on the exams (including other type questions). Students from 4360 had never been assessed before, so there is no temporal comparison available.

No data was available from other introductory and/or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Introductory Human Geography Concepts (Goal 2a)

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate proficiency with basic introductory concepts pertaining to human geography, concepts that serve as the foundation/prerequisite for upper-level coursework in this subfield.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Introductory Human Geography Concepts

Indicator Description:

Questions pertaining to introductory human geography concepts will be embedded in exams for introductory geography courses (GEOG 1300, 2355, 2356, 3350)

Criterion Description:

The average score will be 70% on questions pertaining to introductory human geography

Findings Description:

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 64% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to introductory human geography concepts. Students enrolled in GEOG 3350 (Cultural Geography) averaged 71% on similar type questions. The scores for both courses increased slightly from the previous year's assessment, and were slightly higher than overall scores on the exams (including other type questions).

No data was available from other introductory or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment
Action Description:
The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

GOAL 4: Train students to have a strong foundation in systems thinking

Goal Description:

Students will be able to link physical systems and human/cultural systems, as well as possess sufficient knowledge of human-environment interaction

Providing Department: Geography BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Advanced Concepts in Human-Environment Relationships (Goal 4b)
Learning Objective Description:
Students will demonstrate proficiency with advanced concepts pertaining to human-environment relationships

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Advanced Concepts of Human-Environment Interaction
Indicator Description:
Questions pertaining to advanced concepts of human-environment interaction will be embedded in exams for relevant upper-level geography courses

Criterion Description:
The average score will be 70% on questions pertaining to advanced concepts of advanced human-environment interaction

Findings Description:
Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 scored 53% on embedded questions pertaining to more advanced concepts in human-environment interaction and the nature of environmental systems. This was a decrease from the previous assessment, and a significantly lower score than was realized across the overall exams. The scores for GEOG 1401 were at 51%, which is also lower that realized last year or than was the case for the overall exam grades. The scores on such questions incorporated in GEOG 3301 were slightly higher than the previous year. Students enrolled scored 72% on such questions. Strangely, student enrolled in this class (GEOG 3301) scored much higher on advanced concepts in the subject area than they did on introductory concepts. As was the case with introductory concepts, students enrolled in GEOG 3350 scored 71% on advanced concepts in this subject area. This was on par with the previous year and basically the same score that was realized with overall exam grades.

Not data could be derived from the variety of other advanced courses in geography courses (GEOG 4331, 4432, 3310, 4356, 4357), due to the classes not being offered, or because this assessment was due before data could be derived.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment
Action Description:
The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap

between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Introductory Concepts in Human-Environment Relationships (Goal 4a)

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate proficiency with introductory concepts pertaining to the relationships between human and environmental systems, concepts that will serve as the foundation and pre-requisites for advanced course-work in the sub-field

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Introductory Concepts of Human-Environment Interaction

Indicator Description:

Questions pertaining to introductory concepts of human-environment interaction will be embedded in exams for introductory geography courses (GEOG 1300, 2341, 2355, and 2356)

Criterion Description:

The average score will be 70% on questions pertaining to introductory concepts of human-environment interaction

Findings Description:

Students enrolled in both GEOG 1300 and GEOG 1401 scored 54% on embedded questions pertaining to human-environment interaction and the nature of environmental systems. In the case of GEOG 1300, this was a slight decrease from the previous assessment. The scores for GEOG 1401, however had increased a bit. In both cases the scores were lower than the overall scores for exams in the two courses. The scores on such questions incorporated in GEOG 3301 were slightly higher than the previous year. Students enrolled in this courses scored 61%, which was noticeably lower than overall exam scores. Scores in GEOG 3350 had increased noticeably to 71%.

Not data could be derived from the variety of other advanced courses in geography courses (GEOG 4331, 4432, 3310, 4356, 4357), due to the classes not being offered, or because this assessment was due before data could be derived.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

GOAL 5: Maintain an effective geographical curricula and strong interconnections and linkages across the curricula

Goal Description:

The Geography coordinator and an Assessment Committee will continually gage the degree to which all assessment goals are being met

Providing Department: Geography BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Coordination and Interconnections Across Geographic Sub-fields (Goal 5)

Learning Objective Description:

The Geography Coordinator, in consultation with assessment committee, will continually gage the degree to which the various components of the geography curricula are effectively operating

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Assessment Committee Coordination

Performance Objective Description:

The Geography coordinator will convene meetings with an Assessment Committee comprised of representatives of the various subfields (Human Geography, Environmental/Physical Geography, and Geo-techniques) to discuss curricula outcomes and potential need for changes

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Embedded questions in exams across curricula to assess the world in spatial terms

KPI Description:

Questions pertaining to concepts demonstrating comprehension of the world in spatial terms will be embedded in geography courses (GEOG 1300, 2355, 2356, and 3350)

Results Description:

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 61% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to the world in spatial terms. Students enrolled in GEOG 3350 (Cultural Geography) averaged 73% on a separate series of questions focused on this subject matter. . The scores for the introductory courses (GEOG 1300) decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment, although the scores for GEOG 3350 did increase.

No data was available from other introductory and/or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Questions regarding Foundational Concepts embedded in exams throughout curriculum

KPI Description:

Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in First-Year Foundational Geographic Concepts on questions embedded in exams in a series of major courses.

Results Description:

Questions pertaining to the use of basic statistics were embedded in exams for geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, 2356, 3301, 4331 4351, 4356, and 4357).

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 59% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to basic statistical procedures. Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (weather & climate) averaged 57% on a similar, yet very somewhat different, series of questions. The scores for both introductory courses decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment. Students enrolled in GEOG 3301 scored 72% on different sets of questions pertaining to introductory statistics.

Questions pertaining to the basic use of maps, charts, and graphs were embedded in introductory geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, and 2356)

Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (Weather & Climate) averaged 52% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to maps, charts and graphs. Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 (People, Place & Environment) averaged 58% on a separate, yet very similar, series of questions. The scores for both introductory courses decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment, and were lower than overall scores on the exams

(including other type questions). However, a greater variety of questions were used to assess these skills than had ever been been used before.

No data was available from other courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Assessment Committee Coordination

Performance Objective Description:

The Geography coordinator will convene meetings with an Assessment Committee comprised of representatives of the various subfields (Human Geography, Environmental/Physical Geography, and Geo-techniques) to discuss curricula outcomes and potential need for changes

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Student Satisfaction Survey

Performance Objective Description:

Students will be given a survey their last semester prior to graduation to give feedback on any program issues and on their experiences negotiating the geography programs, including scheduling, course offerings, course content, and overall satisfaction.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Student Satisfaction Survey

Performance Objective Description:

Student Satisfaction with Geography Degree. Students will be given a survey their last semester before graduation to give feedback on any issues with the program, including scheduling, course offerings, course content, and overall satisfaction with the program as a whole.

Goal 1. Train students to have a strong foundation in core Geography concepts

Goal Description:

Geography students will learn basic skills and competencies relevant to a well-rounded geographic education

Providing Department: Geography BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with First-Year Foundational Concepts

Performance Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate proficiency in First-Year Foundational Geographic Concepts

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Questions regarding Foundational Concepts embedded in exams throughout curriculum

KPI Description:

Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in First-Year Foundational Geographic Concepts on questions embedded in exams in a series of major courses.

Results Description:

Questions pertaining to the use of basic statistics were embedded in exams for geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, 2356, 3301, 4331 4351, 4356, and 4357).

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 59% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to basic statistical procedures. Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (weather & climate) averaged 57% on a similar, yet very somewhat different, series of questions. The scores for both introductory courses decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment. Students enrolled in GEOG 3301 scored 72% on different sets of questions pertaining to introductory statistics.

Questions pertaining to the basic use of maps, charts, and graphs were embedded in introductory geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, and 2356)

Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (Weather & Climate) averaged 52% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to maps, charts and graphs. Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 (People, Place & Environment) averaged 58% on a separate, yet very similar, series of questions. The scores for both introductory courses decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment, and were lower than overall scores on the exams (including other type questions). However, a greater variety of questions were used to assess these skills than had ever been been used before.

No data was available from other courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with First-Year Foundational Concepts

Performance Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate proficiency in First-Year Foundational Geographic Concepts

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Questions regarding Foundational Concepts embedded in exams throughout curriculum

KPI Description:

Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in First-Year Foundational Geographic Concepts on questions embedded in exams in a series of major courses.

Results Description:

Questions pertaining to the use of basic statistics were embedded in exams for geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, 2356, 3301, 4331 4351, 4356, and 4357).

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 59% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to basic statistical procedures. Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (weather & climate) averaged 57% on a similar, yet very somewhat different, series of questions. The scores for both introductory courses decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment. Students enrolled in GEOG 3301 scored 72% on different sets of questions pertaining to introductory statistics.

Questions pertaining to the basic use of maps, charts, and graphs were embedded in introductory geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, and 2356)

Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (Weather & Climate) averaged 52% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to maps, charts and graphs. Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 (People, Place & Environment) averaged 58% on a separate, yet very similar, series of questions. The scores for both introductory courses decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment, and were lower than overall scores on the exams (including other type questions). However, a greater variety of questions were used to assess these skills than had ever been been used before.

No data was available from other courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment (BS)

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-

to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Global and Geographical Awareness
Performance Objective Description:
Students will demonstrate a proficient level of global and geographic awareness

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Embedded questions in exams across curricula to assess the world in spatial terms
KPI Description:
Questions pertaining to concepts demonstrating comprehension of the world in spatial terms will be embedded in geography courses (GEOG 1300, 2355, 2356, and 3350)

Results Description:
Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 61% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to the world in spatial terms. Students enrolled in GEOG 3350 (Cultural Geography) averaged 73% on a separate series of questions focused on this subject matter. . The scores for the introductory courses (GEOG 1300) decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment, although the scores for GEOG 3350 did increase.

No data was available from other introductory and/or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment
Action Description:
The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Global and Geographical Awareness
Performance Objective Description:
Students will demonstrate a proficient level of global and geographic awareness

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Embedded questions in exams across curricula to assess the world in spatial terms
KPI Description:
Questions pertaining to concepts demonstrating comprehension of the world in spatial terms will be embedded in geography courses (GEOG 1300, 2355, 2356, and 3350)

Results Description:

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 61% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to the world in spatial terms. Students enrolled in GEOG 3350 (Cultural Geography) averaged 73% on a separate series of questions focused on this subject matter. . The scores for the introductory courses (GEOG 1300) decreased slightly from the previous year's assessment, although the scores for GEOG 3350 did increase.

No data was available from other introductory and/or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

Goal 3. Train Students to Have a Strong Foundation in Environmental/Physical Geography

Goal Description:

Students will be able to fully comprehend and apply concepts from their environmental/physical geography courses

Providing Department: Geography BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Advanced Environmental/Physical Geography Concepts (Goal 3b)

Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate proficiency with advanced concepts pertaining to environmental and physical geography

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Advanced concepts in Environmental/Physical Geography

Indicator Description:

Questions pertaining to advanced concepts in Environmental/Physical Geography will be embedded in exams for upper-level courses in the sub-field (GEOG 3301, 4330, 4331, 4432)

Criterion Description:

The average score will be 70% on questions pertaining to advanced environmental/physical geography

Findings Description:

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 60% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to advanced physical and environmental geography concepts. Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (weather & climate) averaged 53% on similar type questions. The scores for GEOG 1300 were essentially equivalent to those realized from last year's assessment, although the scores for GEOG 1401 were much lower. Both courses realized scores that were equivalent to overall scores on the exams (including other type questions). Students enrolled in GEOG 3301 (Environmental Geography) averaged 67% on these types of questions. As was the case with introductory concepts in the subject area, this score is notably lower than the results realized from the previous assessment.

No data was available from other introductory or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs,

which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency with Introductory Concepts in Environmental/Physical Geography (Goal 3a)
Learning Objective Description:
Students will demonstrate proficiency with basic introductory concepts pertaining to physical and environmental geography, concepts that serve as the foundation/pre-requisites for upper-level coursework in this sub-field

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Introductory Concepts in Environmental/Physical Geography
Indicator Description:
Questions pertaining to introductory environmental/physical geography concepts will be embedded in exams for introductory geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, and 2356).

Criterion Description:
The average score will be 70% on questions pertaining to introductory environmental/physical geography

Findings Description:
Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 61% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to introductory physical and environmental geography concepts. Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (weather & climate) averaged 59% on similar type questions. The scores for both courses increased slightly from the previous year's assessment, and were basically equivalent to overall scores on the exams (including other type questions). Students enrolled in GEOG 3301 (Environmental Geography) averaged 69% on these types of questions. This score is notably lower than the results realized from the previous assessment

No data was available from other introductory or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment
Action Description:
The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Introductory Concepts in Environmental/Physical Geography
Indicator Description:
Questions pertaining to introductory concepts of environmental/physical geography will be embedded in exams for introductory geography courses (GEOG 1300, 1401, 2341, 2355, and 2356)

Criterion Description:

The average score will be 70% on questions pertaining to introductory concepts in Environmental/Physical Geography

Findings Description:

Students enrolled in GEOG 1300 averaged 61% on a series of specific questions embedded in exams that pertained to introductory physical and environmental geography concepts. Students enrolled in GEOG 1401 (weather & climate) averaged 59% on similar type questions. The scores for both courses increased slightly from the previous year's assessment, and were basically equivalent to overall scores on the exams (including other type questions). Students enrolled in GEOG 3301 (Environmental Geography) averaged 69% on these types of questions. This score is notably lower than the results realized from the previous assessment

No data was available from other introductory or advanced courses given that the timeline for completion of this assessment was moved up.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Acting on Assessment (BS)

Action Description:

The progress we made towards the foci emphasized after the last assessment are as follows:

We continued efforts to identify the best way to enhance student ability to effectively work with maps, graphs, & statistical procedures. As has always been the case, the increased numbers of students who enroll in online lecture courses accounted for some of the impediments to this form of student learning. The discrepancy is most noticeable when viewing the results from students enrolled in GEOG 1401 lab. While students performed less well overall on this subject matter (maps, graphs & statistical procedures) compared to previous assessments, the performance gap between online and face-to-face students increased significantly. In short, students enrolled in online labs did less well than those enrolled in face-to-face labs. Beginning in Fall 2022 students enrolled in face-to-face lecture sections of the course will have to also enroll in face-to-face labs, which should alleviate this problem to a degree - fewer students will be enrolled in online labs. We also plan on increasing the use of supplementary videos, and encouraging online students to take advantage of face-to-face office hours. Finally, a new faculty hire that will begin teaching in the department in Fall 2022 will be planning and formulating a new statistical course geared directly towards geosciences.

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising. Another development which will assist with this endeavor is the reformulating of our geography programs. Both the BA and BS degrees were streamlined so that there is one basic degree pathway (in the past, students chose among three different programs which entailed slightly different course requirements). There are now two geography concentrations, but both share the basic introductory set of course requirements.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to course offerings developed by the new faculty member scheduled to join the department in Fall 2022. Once results from other course offerings can be assessment, additional actions will be considered.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

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

Closing Summary

Our data once again suggest that student success is increased when students have completed a series of courses in an effective sequence, as opposed to those who complete the same courses in less organized ways. In the future, we will place more attention on ensuring that students take courses in the proper sequence. We also will use these results to make efforts to more effectively advise students as to the benefits of proper course sequencing. To some degree, the large number of transfers we receive – who come into our program at different times, and from different directions – will continue to make this difficult. Yet we can at least partially mitigate such problems via more effective advising.

The results from this assessment, and previous assessments, will also be used to inform decision-making when it comes to hiring a new faculty member (we are scheduled to hire a replacement for a retired faculty member that will be leaving the university in May of 2022).

Perhaps our most significant plan for continuous improvement represents a response to our newly formulated degree plans. In the past students choosing to major in geography chose to focus their degrees into one of three concentrations; Human Geography, Environmental Geography, and/or GIS. However, starting in Fall 2021 there are simply two concentrations; 1) Environment, Culture and Develop, and 2) GIS. While our degree has been reformulated, all geography majors will now take courses that fall with ALL three sub-areas (Human, Environment, GIS). In order to adjust to the new program structure, we plan to form 3 sub-committees (for each subject-area). Each sub-committee will be charged with identifying goals, objectives, & criterion pertinent to those respective subject areas. All of these assessment items will then eventually be combined into one assessment plan.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Our course offerings and assessment efforts during this latest cycle were less impacted by Covid-related schedule disruptions than the previous year, yet there still were some impacts - particularly in terms of the way student performances were evaluation (which impact how we could assess outcomes). In short, certain courses were still delivered in less of a traditional manner. Moreover, our new, more stream-lined concentration, was only applicable to new students. The majority of our geography majors are still following the older degree plans, whereby the concentrations are less step-like. That said, we were able to derive some conclusions from this assessment.

We were successful at hiring a new faculty member (replacing a faculty hire), whose subject matter expertise was at least somewhat determined from our previous assessments. His presence starting Fall 2022 should assist our effects to strengthen some previously recognized weaknesses in our program. For instance, student performance in many advanced courses generally increased somewhat, at least compared to performance in intro-level course offerings. We feel that this is at least partially a result of students being forced and/or encouraged to take courses in a proper sequence. The one particular intro-level course that generally exhibits the lowest level of student performance (GEOG 1401; Weather & Climate) should now benefit from the presence of a faculty-member who possesses a high level of expertise in that particular subject matter. Of course, in certain ways, and in certain cases (according to certain metrics - math and statistical competency), student performance seemed to be declining overall. To be honest, this seems to be a consistent trend across not only in our department, but across the university and the entire country. I'm not confident that there is anything our department, or any department, can do to mitigate this trend.

It did seem that having more students enrolled in Face-to-face environments did have some positive impact on student performance. This trend is partially related to the fact that fewer and fewer courses were incorporating flexible Covid-protocols - i.e. fewer students were taking coursework remotely or via on-line delivery, attendance was increasingly required, etc.

We did manage to implement a smaller range of critical skills (use of maps and graphs) more intently across the broader curriculum through the implementation of such subject matter in smaller lab sections.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

The results of this past assessment seems to suggest that the key to increased student success (or least the key to mitigating challenges that broad in nature and somewhat out of our control) lies in three areas; 1) teaching certain key concepts in smaller, more intimate settings, 2) teaching said concepts in face-to-face settings, and/or providing supplementary material pertaining to such concepts when delivered online, and 3) teaching such key concepts in ways that facilitate more student-focused learning. This last point (#3) wasn't necessarily suggested by most of the data we used, it was largely based on a sample of just a couple course sections. Regardless, we feel it is self-evident, even if a bit anecdotal.

Obviously, there will be a demand to have larger class-sizes, as well as online courses. We plan on coping this reality by determining key concepts that require critical focus, then trying to incorporate them within lab sections (which by nature are smaller in size). A few faculty have been incorporating active learning techniques (dividing large lecture classes into groups to go over certain key concepts - thus, providing intimate environments, and fostering student-involved learning). Short videos focused on key concepts will be used in some online sections, really the only option in that form of learning environment.

We have yet to fully incorporate some of geotechnique courses into our assessment plan (at least not as fully as other courses). We will be increasingly implemented the above strategies in those courses.

We formed sub-committees to focus on assessment areas (human geography, environment/physical geography, and geotechnology). These committees have met and discussed assessment but in the next cycle will formulating lists of key concepts linked to the respective sub-fields. They will also discuss and figure out the best way to assess the learning of these concepts. I hope is to use their findings as means to modify the details of our assessment plan.