

Homeland Security Studies MS

G 1 Demonstrate Core Knowledge Competency

Goal Description:

Demonstrate that students are learning the core competency areas required in the field.

Providing Department: Homeland Security Studies MS

Progress: Ongoing

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

L 1.1 Demonstrate Core Knowledge

Learning Objective Description:

Students graduating with a master's degree in Security Studies will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the major issues and principles associated with the field of Homeland Security.

Capstone topics will reflect students performing research across the relevant and current domains of Homeland Security such as:

- 1. Emergency Management
- 2. Terrorism
- 3. Border Security/Immigration
- 4. Cybersecurity
- 5. Media and HS
- 6. Intelligence
- 7. Organized Crime
- 8. Public Health/Pandemic and Environmental Security domains.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF 1 Integrated Major Paper

Indicator Description:

The Capstone course, SCST 6388, for Security Studies graduate students requires substantial research and integration of theories and principles of completed coursework in the program. The culminating project in this course requires students to analyze a complex Homeland Security issue. This paper requires a comprehensive literature review, analysis of the issue in relation to national threat, explanation of how the issue was resolved, and how the issue may have been resolved differently. This project should demonstrate the capacity to gather and assess data, think and analyze critically, and produce an effective written product that qualifies either as an academic paper or a policy document.

Criterion Description:

The scoring of core competencies in the Capstone course consists of evaluating four areas; 1) problem statement, 2) review and analysis of the salient literature, 3) use of a relevant methodology with which to gather and analyze data, 4) conclusions based on data and analysis. Each student completing the capstone course will score 80% or higher.

Findings Description:

All graduate students received a score of 80% or above on their major integrated paper

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action for ICF 1 Integrated Major Paper

Action Description:

Students in the graduate program are led to 80% or better completion of their major research projects.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

L 1.2 Demonstrate an Understanding of the Integration of Core Components

Learning Objective Description:

Demonstrate and understanding the complexity of the homeland security enterprise and the various interdependencies of core homeland security components.

Topics of Capstone Research Projects shall illustrate multi-dimensional understanding of the HSE environment.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF 1 Integrated Major Paper

Indicator Description:

The Capstone course, SCST 6388, for Security Studies graduate students requires substantial research and integration of theories and principles of completed coursework in the program. The culminating project in this course requires students to analyze a complex Homeland Security issue. This paper requires a comprehensive literature review, analysis of the issue in relation to national threat, explanation of how the issue was resolved, and how the issue may have been resolved differently. This project should demonstrate the capacity to gather and assess data, think and analyze critically, and produce an effective written product that qualifies either as an academic paper or a policy document.

Criterion Description:

The scoring of core competencies in the Capstone course consists of evaluating four areas; 1) problem statement, 2) review and analysis of the salient literature, 3) use of a relevant methodology with which to gather and analyze data, 4) conclusions based on data and analysis. Each student completing the capstone course will score 80% or higher.

Findings Description:

All graduate students received a score of 80% or above on their major integrated paper

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action for ICF 1 Integrated Major Paper

Action Description:

Students in the graduate program are led to 80% or better completion of their major research projects.

G 2 Knowledge into Action: Professional Application of Coursework

Goal Description:

Demonstrating the capacity to apply skills and knowledge gained in the classroom to the profession (whether in the public sector or private sector).

Providing Department: Homeland Security Studies MS

Progress: Ongoing

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

L 2.1 Apply Research Skills

Learning Objective Description:

Students completing the Master of Science degree in Security Studies will be able to conduct research and produce studies based on the generation and assessment of various sources of data.

Successful completion of Capstones at 80% or better underscores mastery of research and assessment of data.

Thesis track shall be encouraged for highly motivated students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF 2 Successful Performance In Practical Exercises And Internship

Indicator Description:

Demonstrating the capacity to integrate conceptual frameworks to problem solving with practical analytical solutions is a primary indicator of the success of the program's learning objectives. Those students engaging in an internship routinely receive critiques and personal evaluations from both the faculty member monitoring the student (internship director) and the employer who supervises the student intern. In addition, students provide written progress reports during the internship process.

For students who do not follow the internship route, assignments in key courses require that students develop the skill to engage in policy, process, or project development and that they demonstrate this skill in the form of practical outcomes such as policy memos, exercise design, scenario development, or ACE (experiential learning) professional community service delivery.

Criterion Description:

Students following the Internship track will provide a measurable out-of-class outcome based on the nature and quality of their work with an outside agency/company. Students will score greater than 85% on these practical outcomes.

Students not engaging in internships will demonstrate learning based on their improvements in iterations of policy, process, or project development design resulting in policy memos, exercise design, scenario development, or ACE (experiential learning) professional community service delivery.

Findings Description:

All graduate students engaged in internships scored 85% or better

Courses in Emergency Management require students to conduct case studies analyzing policy development based on After Action Reports - all students in EMI 1 and EMI2 successfully completed assigned case studies and offered policy recommendations

Course in Intelligence requires students to conduct intelligence case studies with in-depth analysis of intelligence policies; all students in Intelligence course successfully completed assigned case studies and offered intelligence analysis

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action for ICF 2 Successful Performance In Practical Exercises And Internship

Action Description:

All graduate students engaged in internships score 85% or higher on their internship evaluations. Moreover, one student was offered a job based on her performance. All graduate students undertaking policy analysis and case studies score at 85% or better on those applied projects.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

L 2.2 Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Learning Objective Description:

Students completing the Master's degree will be able to think critically, and apply problem solving techniques to complex issues relating to the Homeland Security Enterprise.

Goal 3: Upskilling Students for Workforce

Goal Description:

This goal relates to equipping students with particular skillsets that they will be able to leverage in competitive entry into workplace

Providing Department: Homeland Security Studies MS

Progress: Ongoing

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

L 1.3: Upskilling Students

Learning Objective Description:

This objective is based on SHSU strategic goal of equipping students with marketable skills; the objective will be defined by professional certifications, memberships, or affiliations that link to those required in the professional field

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

ICF 3 - Upskilling Students

Indicator Description:

KPI 1- Courses will contain professional certificates, webinars, or self-study courses that link to professional contexts

KPI 2 - Students will attend professional webinars

KPI 3 - Students produce field-related genres of writing beyond academic writing

Criterion Description:

Criterion for KPI 1 would be at least 2 graduate courses offering built-in certifications

Criterion for KPI 2 would be attendance of at least 2 professional webinars by graduate students

Criterion for KPI 3 would be at least 2 different genres of writing that reflect professional genres used in the field

Findings Description:

Students in graduate courses in Emergency Management received a total of 12 FEMA certificates

Students in graduate courses in Intelligence attended 2 webinars and completed 1 certification course from Center for Defense and Homeland Security

Students in Leadership in HSEM completed a meta-leadership certification from Center for Defense and Homeland Security

Students in Critical Infrastructure courses produce policy analysis memos

Students in Global Perspectives in HS produce comparative briefs

Students in Emergency Management Integration 2 developed resiliency plans

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Action - Upskilling Students

Action Description:

The department has been very successful at integrating various modes of professional genre writing, offers numerous certifications within courses and creates opportunities for webinars.

Goal 4: Creating Graduate Level Leadership

Goal Description:

Create graduate-level academic administrative support to students and curriculum

Providing Department: Homeland Security Studies MS

Progress: Ongoing

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

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

Closing Summary

For the 2022/2023 cycle the Department of Security Studies will focused on implementing recommendations from the 2015-2020 Self-Study report. To that end, the most critical piece is revising tenure and promotion and FES criteria to ensure their alignment with department needs, inclusion of junior faculty in the process to ensure transparency, and the alignment with SHSU strategic visioning. Moreover, the department lost a tenured faculty in summer 2022 and for 2022/23 we will conduct a search and hire faculty that will fill the gap and strenghten Emergency Management and legal capacity in our graduate program. The department will start strategic planning for expansion of graduate program towards PHD in the future, to include seeking opportunities to create a position of Program Director that will enhance support to the graduate arm of the department. We will continue to coordinate with College staff responsible for alumni tracking as well as with Internship Director for (a) internship placement, (b) tracking, and (c) assessment. We will explore collaboration with ORSP to leverage their grant writing seminars for our graduate student. We will continue to support student research and expand graduate student scholarship through participation in conferences, publications, and workshops. We will set up a better system for Capstone archiving and evaluatuion. We will continue to assess the ratio of face to face and online courses to ensure appropriate sequencing and appropriate offerings in Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters and endeavor to make all our graduate classes full for Fall 2023. We will continue to focus on offering summer courses for our graduate students who are working professionals.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

For the 2022/2023 cycle the Department of Security Studies focused on implementing recommendations from the 2015-2020 Self-Study report. To that end, the most critical piece is revising tenure and promotion and FES criteria to ensure their alignment with department needs, inclusion of junior faculty in the process to ensure transparency, and the alignment with SHSU strategic visioning. Moreover, the department lost a tenured faculty in summer 2022 and for 2022/23 we conducted a search and hired faculty Dr. Thomas Haase with expertise in Emergency Management and legal studies which will be a great contribution to the department because we do not have legal expertise per se. The department started strategic planning for expansion of graduate program towards PHD but market analysis has not yet been conducted. We created a position of Program Director that will enhance support to the graduate arm of the department. We have continued to coordinate with College staff responsible for alumni tracking as well as with Internship Director for (a) internship placement, (b) tracking, and (c) assessment. We have explored the collaboration with ORSP to leverage their grant writing seminars for our graduate student but determined it was not very applicable to our student body and field needs. We supported student research through robust Capstone mentoring and direction, though community engaged research projects such as Templeton scholarship

initiative; our students have received a number of certifications and attended webinars; moreover students like Ariana Camarillo were funded by and assisted with grant research. We have not reached conclusion for Capstone archiving - Ms. Carlson implemented a better communication system with students to report their topics but it has not been very efficient. We are unfortunately losing face to face courses (only one in the Fall and none in the Spring) as students migrate to online. It is however easier to ensure appropriate sequencing and appropriate offerings in Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters; all our graduate classes made for Fall 2023. We have offered at least 2 summer courses for our graduate students who are working professionals.

New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

As the Department secured the position of the Graduate Program Director we are well aligned to conduct a robust assessment of the needs of the Master of Science in HSS program in 2023/2024 year. The new Director will work with the assessment to implement ways to align course objectives with content delivery in some of the courses. Also, he will seek ways to implement grant writing course that will be better suited for our graduate students. The Director will assess the feasibility of enhancing the number of face to face courses and conduct surveys with students about their interest and availability for various schedules. Because major tool for assessment are IDEA evaluations and those might be replaced ,we will work with the University on adopting potential assessment tools in the future. Our new faculty Dr. Haase will engage in creating new courses as well as be encouraged to offer ACE component due to his strong ties with professionals in the field. We will seek opportunities to engage graduate students better in participating in conferences in the future. We will continue a strong working relationship with the Internship Director at the College to ensure good internship placement and potential career opportunities for graduate students. Dr. Haase will revise Law and Ethics in HS course to integrate more applicable content and to include legal genre writing.