

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of  
Assessment Plan Summary

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

CHSS Staff Development

Goal Description:

The CHSS will promote the intellectual and professional development of staff members serving departments and programs in the college.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Staff Professional Development

Performance Objective Description:

The CHSS will identify and increase the number of college staff members obtaining outside professional and intellectual development experiences.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Off-Site Conferences And Professional Development

KPI Description:

Staff professional development will exceed the minimally mandated hours provided by the university. CHSS will fund staff attendance at at least one regional or national conference dedicated to developing university staff professionals.

Results Description:

Human resources reported that CHSS staff members who were hired from outside SHSU completed an average of 23.33 hours of training during the past year. Additionally, continuing CHSS staff members completed an average of 21.11 hours of training during the past year. In both cases, CHSS staff members exceeded SHSU's 8-hour staff development requirement by a wide margin.

Two staff members attended a total of three offsite conferences during 2015-2106. While this result does not meet the expected criterion for success, CHSS has already committed to sending 13 staff members to the Association of Executive and Administrative Professionals, which will be held in September 2016.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Staff Professional Development

Action Description:

Staff feedback on about professional development remains overwhelmingly positive. CHSS will continue to offer staff the opportunity for off-site professional development, and seek opportunities to improve its staff development process.

Excellence In Academic Programs

Goal Description:

The CHSS will develop academic programs and constantly review existing programs to ensure excellence in this important mission of the college.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Enhance Graduate Student Entering Credentials

Performance Objective Description:

The CHSS will increase the quality of credentials of incoming graduate students.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Incoming Graduate Student GPA

KPI Description:

Graduate programs across CHSS will demonstrate a total average incoming graduate student GPA increase of 2%.

Results Description:

Degree Program GPA's by Semester

Degree Program	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016
Comm Studies MA	3.15	3.52	3.16	3.31	No admits
Creative Writing MFA	3.13	3.67	3.49	3.79	No admits
English MA	3.54	3.70	3.40	3.31	3.02
Spanish MA	3.25	2.97	3.28	3.53	3.51
History MA	3.39	3.65	3.55	3.32	3.24
Political Science MA	3.59	3.23	3.70	3.12	3.13
Political Science MPA	3.60	3.53	3.48	3.71	3.39
Psychology MA	3.58	No admits	3.10	No admits	No admits
School Psych SSP	3.31	No admits	3.56	No admits	No admits
Clinical Psych MA	3.63	No admits	3.71	No admits	No admits
Clinical Psych PhD	3.73	No admits	3.86	No admits	No admits
Sociology MA	3.18	3.53	3.50	3.31	No admits

**Degree Program Percentage Change Year-to-Year Change by Semester**

Degree Program	Fall 2014-Fall 2015	Spring 2015-Spring 2016
Comm Studies MA	+0.3%	-6.0%
Creative Writing MFA	+11.5%	+3.3%
English MA	-4.0%	-10.5%
Spanish MA	+0.9%	+18.9%
History MA	+4.7%	-9.0%
Political Science MA	+3.1%	-3.4%
Political Science MPA	-3.3%	+5.1%
Psychology MA	-13.4%	NA
School Psych MA	+7.6%	NA
Clinical Psych MA	+2.2%	NA
Clinical Psych PhD	+3.5%	NA
Sociology MA	+10.1%	-6.2%

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**

**Effectiveness of Graduate Education**

**Action Description:**

CHSS plans to shift its focus away from assessing aggregate graduate student credentials toward tracking graduate student outcomes. This shift will emphasize student completion data rather than admissions data. The college will work with individual graduate departments to develop tracking that recognizes the value of students achieving desired outcomes even if those outcomes do not include completion of graduate degrees (e.g., completion of 18 hours of graduate course work, which qualifies teachers to teach dual credit courses).

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2**

**Increase GRE Scores Of Incoming Graduate Students**

**KPI Description:**

Increase GRE scores of incoming graduate students in departments with underachieving admissions criteria. During this academic year, average GRE scores of incoming graduate students in the departments of COM, SOC and FOL will increase by 2%.

**Results Description:**

**Degree Program Average GRE Scores**

Degree Program	2014-2015 Average	2015-2016 Average	Year-over-Year Change
Comm Studies MA	299	284	-5.0%
Creative Writing MFA	306	295	-3.6%
English MA	306	301	-1.6%
Spanish MA	Not Required	Not Required	NA
History MA	304	301	-1.0%
Politcal Science MA	294	299	+1.7%
Political Science MPA	302	302	0.0%
Psychology MA	298	300	+0.7%
School Psych SSP	306	303	-1.0%
Clinical Psych MA	310	311	+0.3%
Clinical Psych PhD	314	312	-0.6%
Sociology MA	301	289	-4.0%

Across all programs, the unweighted average was -1.2%, a minor change from the previous year.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Effectiveness of Graduate Education**

**Action Description:**

CHSS plans to shift its focus away from assessing aggregate graduate student credentials toward tracking graduate student outcomes. This shift will emphasize student completion data rather than admissions data. The college will work with individual graduate departments to develop tracking that recognizes the value of students achieving desired outcomes even if those outcomes do not include completion of graduate degrees (e.g., completion of 18 hours of graduate course work, which qualifies teachers to teach dual credit courses).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

**Increase Student Enrollments**

**Performance Objective Description:**

The CHSS will increase both undergraduate and graduate student enrollments by specified amounts each year.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Increase Enrollments In Graduate Programs**

**KPI Description:**

Increase enrollments in graduate programs by 10%.

**Results Description:**

In 2014-15, CHSS recorded 1049 graduate student enrollments for 6,200 student credit hours. In 2015-16, there were 964 graduate student enrollments for 5,643 credit hours. These figures represented an 8.1% decrease in student enrollments and a 4.1% decrease in total graduate student credit hours.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Increase Enrollments in Graduate Programs with Capacity**

**Action Description:**

CHSS is committed to increasing enrollment in graduate programs with capacity at a rate equal to or greater than the overall growth of Sam Houston State University.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Increase Undergraduate Enrollments**

**KPI Description:**

Increase undergraduate majors in programs of college by 2%

**Results Description:**

In 2014-2015, CHSS recorded 4,541 undergraduate-major enrollements for a total of 120,274 student credit hours. In 2015-2016 the figures were 4,648 undergraduate-major enrollments for 119,738 hours. These changes indicated a 2% increase in major enrollments with an 0.4% decrease in student credit hours.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Increase Undergraduate Enrollments**

**Action Description:**

CHSS is committed to increasing undergraduate enrollments at a rate equal to or greater than the overall growth of Sam Houston State University.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

**Periodic Graduate Program Review**

**Performance Objective Description:**

The CHSS will complete a thorough program review of each of its graduate programs before August 2019.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Graduate Program Review Process**

**KPI Description:**

The College will complete program reviews of all its graduate programs according to the following schedule:

Review	Year Program
2012-13	History MA
2013-14	School Psychology SSP
2015-16	Political Science MA
2015-16	Public Admin MA
2015-16	Communication Studies MA
2016-17	Sociology MA
2016-17	Spanish MA
2018-19	English MA
2018-19	Clinical Psychology MA

Scheduled completion of the PSYC MA SSP review before closure of the 2013-2014 reporting cycle will indicate timely initiation of this process.

All departments will fulfill the process by submitting thorough program self-studies conducted according to a rubric provided by the Office of Graduate Studies. Each department will then host on-campus visitors from peer institutions/programs to review the reports and to make further recommendations. Departments will conclude the process by submitting responses to visitors' reports and any additional program planning inspired by the overall program review.

**Results Description:**

During 2015-2016, CHSS completed program reviews for the MA in Communications Studies and the MA and MPA in Political Science.

The review of the Communication Studies offered only minor suggestions relating to the acceptance of more course hours from students with "graduate certificates in the Communication Discipline" and a possible addition of new admissions requirements. The review closed by stating, "The bottom line is that this is an excellent, well-administered program..."

The review of the Political Science MPA program acknowledged the promising future of the program. In addition to encouraging the program to seek NASPAA accreditation in the future, the final report includes recommendations on a variety of subjects, including curricular review, policy clarifications, outreach activities, and academic partnerships.

The review of the Political Science MA program commended the program for successfully transitioning to on-line delivery. The reviewers also offered specific recommendations relating to a review of admissions criteria, a review of course descriptions and titles, and a review of course offerings, among other things. Finally, given the recent transition to on-line delivery, the review recommended an additional outside review in 2-3 years.

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**

**Graduate Program Review**

**Action Description:**

The college will work with Communication Studies and Political Science to implement changes in response to the 2015-2016 graduate program reviews.

In 2016-2017, the Spanish MA and Sociology MA will undergo their program reviews as scheduled.

In response to significant changes at the Texas Review Press and the arrival of a new Department Chair, the English Department's English MA and Creative Writing MFA will undergo their graduate program reviews during 2016-2017, two years ahead of schedule.

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1**

**Promote Centers Of Scholarly Excellence**

**Performance Objective Description:**

The CHSS will develop centers for focused scholarly activity within the departments

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2**

**Centers Of Scholarly Excellence**

**KPI Description:**

Each department will present to the dean of the college at least one area of focused scholarly excellence for that department. The college will support the establishment of at least two interdisciplinary research centers recommended by CHSS faculty.

**Results Description:**

CHSS did not create any new centers during 2015-2016. However, the College did create two new minors, one designed to support the Center for Community Engagement and one designed as a first step toward a proposed Sam Houston Center for Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking.

CHSS, the Department of Sociology, and the Center for Community Engagement successfully proposed an interdisciplinary minor in Community Leadership to meet the interests and needs of current and future SHSU students and the growing needs of local communities. The Minor in Community Leadership is aimed at teaching students the knowledge, skills, and dispositions requested by local community leaders, and confirmed by the literature on community leadership, to be agents of change in their communities. Majors that would pair most readily with this minor include, but are not limited to: sociology, political science, communication studies, agriculture, health services promotion, public health, criminal justice. The Minor in Community Leadership provides material support for the mission of the Center for Community Engagement.

CHSS also successfully proposed an interdisciplinary minor in Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking to prepare students to identify, evaluate, and make progress on large-scale societal problems by honing their critical thinking skills on applied ethical issues. Students who complete the minor will graduate from Sam Houston State University with significant experience engaging with opposing viewpoints on a range of pressing ethical issues. In short, they will be well prepared to launch careers and enter the public sphere as engaged citizens. The Minor in Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking represents a major first step toward a proposed Sam Houston Center for Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking.

**RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3**

**Scholarly Centers**

**Action Description:**

In light of SHSU's shift away from the creation of scholarly centers, CHSS will no longer emphasize the creation of scholarly centers. CHSS will continue its development of the Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking Minor and continue to investigate options to expand opportunities for applied student experiences and interdisciplinary collaborations.

**Faculty Research Development**

**Goal Description:**

The CHSS will identify and promote best practices for faculty research development.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

**Faculty Conference Participation**

**Performance Objective Description:**

The CHSS will increase faculty activity at scholarly conferences.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Faculty Presentations At Scholarly Conferences**

**KPI Description:**

Universities must not only produce new knowledge, but they must also disseminate this knowledge. Conference presentations are one method of disseminating knowledge. The college will collect data on the number of presentations at professional, peer-reviewed conferences and compare this with the previous year. Because these are peer-reviewed presentations, the quality of the research is also measured. The College will increase by 2% the number of per capita professional conference presentations by faculty in the college.

**Results Description:**

In 2015, the college faculty of 119 made 293 conference publications for a per capita rate of 2.46. In 2014, 115 college faculty made 278 conference presentations for a per capita rate of 2.42.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Faculty Conference Presentations**

**Action Description:**

The office of the Dean of CHSS will continue to offer travel support to faculty in the various programs where appropriate. More strategically, the college will begin a review of the system of merit rewards, to ensure that scholarly and pedagogical activities not immediately resulting in peer-reviewed publication nonetheless win the participating faculty rewards for their efforts.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

**Faculty Grant Activity**

**Performance Objective Description:**

The CHSS will increase the number of grants submitted by college faculty and funded.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Increased Grant Submissions And Grant Funding**

**KPI Description:**

One measure of the productivity of faculty is the number of outside grants funded. Outside funding shows that the research of the faculty is of high quality. The amount of funding varies by the discipline as do the funding opportunities. The College will collect data on the number and amounts of outside funding received by our faculty, as well as the number of grants submitted. These numbers will be compared to last year's numbers. The College will increase by 2% the per capita number of grants externally submitted and the percentage of submitted external grants that are funded. Measurements of per capita grant activity and grant success rates also will be analyzed.

**Results Description:**

In 2015, 119 CHSS faculty submitted a total of 35 external grant applications for a per capita submission rate of .29. CHSS faculty had 20 external grants funded for a per capita success rate of .17. The submission success rate was 57%.

In 2014, 115 CHSS faculty submitted 35 external grant applications for a per capita submission rate of .30. CHSS faculty had 12 external grants funded for a per capita success rate of .10. The submission success rate was 34%.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Faculty Grant Activity**

**Action Description:**

CHSS will continue to work with faculty in an effort to promote both increased grant submission and grant funding rates.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

**Faculty Research Publications**

**Performance Objective Description:**

The CHSS will increase the number of faculty involved in peer-reviewed publications.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Peer-Reviewed Publications**

**KPI Description:**

Universities must produce new knowledge and understanding. The college will collect data on the number of peer-reviewed publications and compare this with the previous year. Because these are peer-reviewed publications, the quality of the research also is measured. The college will increase the per capita number of peer-reviewed publications by 2%.

**Results Description:**

In 2015, 119 CHSS faculty produced 172 peer-reviewed publications for a per capita production of 1.44. In 2014, 115 faculty produced 155 such works a per capita production of 1.35. This represents a 6.2% increase in the per capita rate of peer-reviewed publications

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Faculty Research Publications**

**Action Description:**

Faculty research activity in CHSS continues to meet all expectations. The college will therefore maintain its commitment to promote and reward scholarship and principally to assist departments with research support money whenever appropriate.

**Student Research Development**

**Goal Description:**

The CHSS will promote the whole experience of students taking courses in the college: classroom activities, research opportunities, and presentation opportunities. The college will also monitor student graduation outcomes.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

**Student Research Objectives**

**Performance Objective Description:**

The CHSS will increase the quality and quantity of both undergraduate and graduate student research publication activities.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Number Of Students Presenting And Publishing**

**KPI Description:**

As research and scholarly activity increases with faculty, the college would like to see more students involved in the research process. The process of creating knowledge is essential to each discipline, and exposing students to this process provides quality instruction. The College will collect data concerning the number of peer-reviewed presentations and publications by undergraduate students and by graduate students and compare this to last year's data. The College will increase by 2% the number of undergraduate student and graduate students who are involved in research that result in publication or presentation at professional conferences.

**Results Description:**

In 2015, 40 undergraduate students made 49 conference presentations. In 2014-2015, 20 undergraduate students made 27 presentations.

During 2016-2017, CHSS petitioned for and received funding (\$17,996) to launch an interdisciplinary undergraduate journal during 2016-2017. Two undergraduate EURECA proposals were funded by the university. CHSS offered to fund three additional proposals, one of which was not funded because the professor in charge resigned to take a position at a different university.

In 2015, 103 graduate students made 72 conference presentations. In 2014-2015, at least 100 CHSS graduate students made 195 conference presentations.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Student Research**

**Action Description:**

The college will continue to support both graduate and undergraduate research through funding to support travel for students to present at conferences and grants to support research activities.

CHSS expects a successful launch of our new interdisciplinary undergraduate journal during 2016-2017.

Additional activities that will be explored during 2016-2017 include: introductory workshops for students in humanities and social sciences disciplines, canvassing of departmental clubs for students who are interested in and capable of conducting research, and canvassing of honor societies students who are interested in and capable of conducting research.

**Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement**

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

- 1) Having achieved successful start-up of the Center for Disaster and Emergency Management, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences will explore an additional center to fulfill the strategic plan of two new centers. Currently, a likely candidate will be a center to coordinate a critical thinking minor.
- 2) CHSS will repeat and expand the staff development support program.
- 3) The Office of the Dean of CHSS will analyze and report on the efforts of departments successful in enrollment growth (PSYC, HIST) for the assistance of other departments and programs.

- 4) Faculty scholarship and grant activity remain at effective levels. The Office of the Dean will implement budget reforms to enhance availability of funds to support such activity.
- 5) It being 10 years since CHSS began operations as an individual college, the Dean will organize a full-scale review and, where necessary, revision of college policies regarding tenure/promotion and merit assessment.

**Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:**

CHSS submitted a plan for a new Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking minor. It is currently going through the university curriculum approval process. It is expected to be online and available to students starting in Fall 2017. The college will continue to explore its options for creating a new center for Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking; however, the creation of new centers will no longer be a major focus of college efforts.

CHSS continues to work on staff development. Although the college did not meet its 2015-2016 goal for off-campus development opportunities for staff members, the college has already committed to sending a substantial number of staff members to a conference in September 2016, and plans to continue its efforts to promote staff development and training.

CHSS was unable to analyze and report on enrollment growth. Because of turnover in the Associate Dean positions, the college lacked the continuity to launch and successfully complete this effort.

CHSS met its targets for faculty scholarship and grant activity. Moving forward, the college plans to devote more attention to student research.

CHSS did not undertake a comprehensive review of its tenure and promotion policy or its merit pay policy. Because of turnover among the Associate Deans and the advice of legal counsel, the college is proceeding in a more measured fashion by attempting to address known individual elements before returning for a more complete view at a later date.

**2015-2016 Plan for Continuous Improvement**

**Closing Summary:**

For 2016-2017, CHSS will undertake a number of initiatives:

- 1) CHSS will continue to pursue growth of its graduate and undergraduate programs aiming to at least match the growth of the university as a whole.
- 2) CHSS will continue to emphasize scholarly productivity in the form of grants and publications among faculty. The college will also work to promote increased student research within its programs.
- 3) CHSS will take a careful look at its hiring process. The college will ensure the adoption of best practices and begin tracking and reporting on its efforts to diversify its faculty.
- 4) CHSS will work toward parity of funding for doctoral students in the college relative to doctoral students in other colleges.
- 5) CHSS will use a meta-assessment process to improve its assessment practices. This effort will seek two major goals: 1) identifying synergies between existing practices and assessment to reduce the workload created by assessment, and 2) identifying and supporting novel assessment practices that can reduce the burden of assessment on classroom faculty.

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