

Homeland Security Studies MS
Assessment Plan Summary

Homeland Security Studies MS

Demonstrate Core Knowledge Competency

Goal Description:

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

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrate Knowledge And Integration Of Core Competencies

Learning Objective Description:

Students graduating with a master's degree in Security Studies will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and assessment of the major issues and pinciples related to Homeland Security.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Integrated Major Paper

Indicator Description:

The Capstone course, CRIJ 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 state a Homeland Security or related issue and place it in context of the related security field. This paper requires a comprehensive literature reivew, analysis of the issue in relation to national threat, explanation of how the issue was reslolved, and how the issue may have been resolved differently. Through this anaylsis, core competencies in the field should be demonstrated.

Criterion Description:

The scoring rubric for the core competency project in the Capston course consists of four areas; 1) statement of the issue, 2) review of the salient literature, 3) appropriate sources cited, and 4) reflections of how the curriculum contribted to your abiltiy to solve the issue. Each student completing the capstone course will score 80% or higher on the rubric.

Findings Description:

During the 2016-17 academic year, 15 students successfully completed their capstone courses (based on a capstone paper) with a score of 80% or higher, and 2 students have incompletes.

Knowledge into Action: Professional Application of Coursework

Goal Description:

Professional application of the skills and knowledge gained in the classroom.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Research, Critical Thinking and Analysis

Learning Objective Description:

Students completing the Master of Science degree in Security Studies will be able to think conduct research, think critically, and apply problem solving techniques to complex issues relating to the Homeland Security Enterprise.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Successful Performance In Practical Exercises And Internship

Indicator Description:

Integration of theroetical approaches to problem solving with practical analytical solutions is a primary indicator of the success of the program's learning objectives. During the internship experience, security studies graduate students reoutinely recevie critiques and personal evaluations from both the facutly 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.

Criterion Description:

It is not enough to perform well in the classroom. Nearly each course students take in the Security Studies program requires successful completion of some measurable out-of-class project or outcome. Students will score greater than 85% on these practical excercises at the apex of their training experience during their internship.

Findings Description:

For the 2016-17 academic year, all the students in internship courses achieved a score of 85% or more (13 students total). ll the students in the security management course achieved a score of 85% or more in practical exercises.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

The homeland security enterprise emphasizes communication and coordination to solve complex problems, and the integration of knowledge and skills from different realms. Accordingly, in this school year (2016-7), we plan to improve the MS in Homeland Security Studies degree program in the following two ways: First, we will continue to develop and update our course content to ensure that it is useful and relevant to the field and works to prepare students for decision-making positions within the Homeland Security Enterprise. Second, we will continue to bridge the gap between academia and the real world. This is a big job, but there are a few concrete things we can do to contribute to a better integration between this disparate realms. In our hiring decisions, we will look for candidates who utilize and integrate different approaches (academic, policy, and practitioner) to homeland security issues. And in our classes, we will seek to prepare our students to apply their skills in the real world, especially through real-world examples and cases. These improvements will not only help our program succeed in its academic goals, but also bring us more fully in line with best practices in the field of homeland security.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

We will continue to endeavor to ensure that our curriculum is relevant to the field and up-to-date. We will also work to ensure that students benefit from real-world knowledge and experience as part of their course of academic studies. We will also work to open the program up to a larger-range of students by increasing our online offerings and developing new online programs.

The department is currently working to add a course on leadership in emergency management to the MS Homeland Security Studies curriculum in order to strengthen the offerings in the emergency management sub-discipline.

Expanding program offerings

Closing Summary:

We will continue to expand program offerings in the MS HSS (including the newly-developed Leadership in HS/EM course) as well as the BS Homeland Security Studies being currently developed.