



Sam Houston
State University

2016-2017

**College of Humanities
and
Social Sciences**

Department of Communication Studies

Assessment Plan Summary**Department: Communication Studies BA/BS****Sam Houston State University****President, Office of****Academic Affairs, Division of****Humanities and Social Sciences, College of****Communication Studies, Department of****Communication Studies BA/BS****Application Of Theory****Goal Description**

To develop student understanding and utilization of communication theory in all major communication contexts, including the development of critical thinking skills. These contexts include interpersonal and family relationships, small group professional and business situations, and public/media messages. Examples of communication theories include, but are not limited to, expectancy violations theory, social penetration theory, relational dialectics theory, social judgment theory, cognitive dissonance theory, cultivation theory, agenda-setting theory, face-negotiation theory, and standpoint theory.

Related Items/Elements **Applying Communication Theory****Learning Objective Description**

Graduates will be able to apply communication theory to specific communication contexts.

 Student Application Of Theory**Indicator Description**

We will measure attainment of Goal 1 through an annual evaluation of a sample of final student term papers in 3300 and 4300 level courses, such as Intercultural Communication, Small Group Communication, Nonverbal Communication, Communication Theory, and Family Communication. The first component of this rubric is Evidence of Understanding of the Applicable Theory or Theories including the Effective Connection of Theory or Theories to Communication Behavior. The scale for measuring this degree objective will be the same throughout the department's set of objectives for BA/BS students.

Criterion Description

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description

Two faculty members evaluated student papers (N = 25). The overall mean of the

evaluations was 4.1.

Adopting Best Practices in Applying Theory

Action Description

While the criterion for students learning to apply communication theory was met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department.

Student Mastery Of Written Composition

Indicator Description

The second component of this rubric is Control of the Mechanics of Written Composition.

Criterion Description

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description

A set of student 34 papers were evaluated by two faculty members. The combined mean of the evaluation was 4.25.

Adopting Best Practices in Enhancing Mastery in Written Composition

Action Description

While the criterion for students master written composition was met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department.

Communication Presentations

Goal Description

To train students (majors and nonmajors alike) to make a variety of effective communication presentations in different professional, educational, and social contexts. These presentations include informative and persuasive speeches, group decision making discussions, and interviews.

Related Items/Elements

Communication Presentations

Learning Objective Description

Graduates will be able to communicate effectively in a variety of oral communication situations

Student Presentations

Indicator Description

We will measure attainment of Goal 2 first through an annual evaluation of a

sample of recorded final student presentations given in such courses as Public Speaking and Speech for Business and the Professions. The *components of this rubric* include the following: Evidence of Content Mastery and Evidence of Mastery of Delivery including Visual Aids.

Criterion Description

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description

Student presentations (N = 16) were evaluated by two faculty members. The overall mean student score for the presentations were 3.7.

 Adopting Best Practices in Enhancing Student Presentations and Outlines**Action Description**

While the criterion for students learning to present effective presentations and to construct effective speech outlines were met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant performance courses across the department.

 Student Speech Outlines**Indicator Description**

We will measure attainment of Goal 2 secondly through an evaluation of the student speech outlines accompanying the recorded final student presentations. The *components of this rubric* are adherence to standard outline form and proper reference citation form.

Criterion Description

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description

Student outlines (N = 16) were evaluated by two faculty members. The overall mean student score for the presentation outlines was 3.65.

 Adopting Best Practices in Enhancing Student Presentations and Outlines**Action Description**

While the criterion for students learning to present effective presentations and to construct effective speech outlines were met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant performance courses across the department.

Research And Computer Literacy

Goal Description

To develop student competencies in locating, understanding, assessing, and reporting communication research findings. This includes training in the use of print and electronic database sources and focuses attention on published scholarly research. It also includes training in the use of computer software appropriate for the word processing of reports and the use of online research sources.

Related Items/Elements

Research And Computer Literacy

Learning Objective Description

Graduates will be able to assess and report the results of communication research found in refereed scholarly journals as well as in electronic and online databases.

Student Research And Computer Literacy

Indicator Description

We will measure Goal 3 with an annual evaluation of a sample of student papers involving reviews of research literature assigned in such courses as Introduction to Communication Theory and Communication Theory. The *first component of this rubric* is Evidence of a Comprehensive Knowledge of a Confined Research Area and is the same as for Goal 1 Indicator 1. Included in this rubric is an assessment of each student's mastery of Microsoft Word and the use of Communication Abstracts and similar online databases.

Criterion Description

An average grade of 3 is the criterion for satisfying the target outcome.

Findings Description

Student papers (N = 35) were evaluated by two faculty members. The overall mean score for Research and Computer Literacy was 3.45.

Adopting Best Practices to Enhance Student Research and Computer Literacy

Action Description

While the criterion for students' research and computer literacy was met, there is always room to improve. With that in mind, faculty meet to discuss best practices and implement them in relevant courses across the department.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

The undergraduate programs both showed strongly in all areas in the last cycle but have much room for improvement especially in helping students improve their writing. Measures in place seem to be working and will be continued, with attention to whether change or modification is needed to increase effectiveness.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

The undergraduate programs both showed strongly in all areas in the last cycle but have much room for improvement especially in helping students improve their writing. Measures in place seem to be working and will be continued, with attention to whether change or modification is needed to increase effectiveness.

B.A./B.S. Plan for Continuous Improvement**Closing Summary**

With positive findings for each of the goals set for the B.A. and B.S. programs (Application of Theory, Communication Presentations, and Research & Computer Literacy), practices in place will be continued and refined. Regular discussions will be held to discuss concerns and best practices.

Department of English

Assessment Plan Summary
Department: English BA

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

English, Department of

English BA

Literature And Literary Theory (4000-Level)

Goal Description

Students majoring in English will gain an appreciation of specific critical approaches and methodologies in studying literature and literary theory.

Related Items/Elements

 **Reading Literature Critically And Writing About It Analytically**

Learning Objective Description

Students will be able to use various approaches and methodologies to analyze literary texts and demonstrate the ability to interpret texts by communicating their understanding of those texts in analytic essays. Students will have an opportunity to write analytical and critical discussions of literature.

 **Assessment Of Writing**

Indicator Description

Reading and writing are part and parcel of each other. Essays written to analyze and/or apply literary texts suggest the depth and quality of the students' reading, as well as their understanding of the assignment. Thus, during the spring 2015 semester, we will collect writing samples of English majors from 4000-level (senior-level) classes and examine them to ascertain the effectiveness of reading that they evince. Our goal is to read 25% of the essays, chosen at random, written by English majors in 4000-level literature courses. We anticipate an enrollment of some 105 students in any given long semester and so should expect to read 26 to 30 essays.

Criterion Description

80% of English seniors in 4000-level writing-enhanced classes will meet the departmental criteria for academic writing that reflects critical thinking and good

editing.

To assess the effectiveness of student writing abilities, English faculty will conduct an annual holistic review of representative essays produced across all sections of 4000-level (senior) classes.

Holistic Scoring Procedures

1. To assure that the assessment reviews a representative sampling of writing, teachers of 4000-level sections in Spring 2015 were asked to submit a final paper significant writing from 3-4 students in each section, with these students selected at random by the department's secretarial staff. Submitted papers represent some 25% of students enrolled. (See attached memo to 4000-level instructors.)
2. Two primary readers from among the tenured/tenure-track English faculty independently read and score each essay under review; in the case of an unreliable result, the essay is referred to a secondary (i.e., a third) reader, who reads the essay independently, without any knowledge of the previous results (see number 5, below).
3. Each primary reader scores each essay on a 4-point scale, with a score of 4 the highest possible. The two primary scores are added to yield a total, with the final scores ranging from 8 (highest possible) to 2 (lowest possible). A combined score of 5 or higher is passing. A score of 7 or 8 indicates an excellent essay; a score of 5 or 6 indicates an acceptable essay; a score of 4 or less indicates an unacceptable essay.
4. Reliability of the two scores is assumed when both scores from the primary readers are congruent, that is, when they are within 1 point of each other. For example, a score of 6 that would be seen as reliable would mean that both readers marked the essay as a 3. A reliable score of 5 would mean that one reader assessed the essay as a 3 while the other reader assessed it as a 2.
5. Should the primary scores for an essay not be reliable—for example, a 4 and a 1, a 3 and a 1, a 4 and a 2—the essay is referred to a secondary reader. If that reader agrees with the higher score, the essay is certified as acceptable or excellent; if the secondary reader agrees with the lower score, the essay is certified as unacceptable.

Findings Description

88.24% of the papers scored were assessed as having met the departmental criteria for critical thinking and editing. Thus, we did not meet our goal for this assessment. Below is a listing of the overall scoring of essays (N = 17):

(excellent essay) = 7
(competent essay) = 8
(unacceptable essay) = 2

Although we fell short in our goal for the number of artifacts gathered, we collected more this year than last (17 this year, 9 last year). The department is going to continue to explore more effective ways of gathering artifacts from individual courses in order to reach the 25-30 essays to evaluate in our holistic rubric. We believe that will give a more accurate overall assessment.

Action: Gathering data and artifacts

Action Description

Much of our assessment is dependent on gathering good artifacts for evaluation and scoring. However, we are still not getting the samples that we need. Therefore, the department will appointment a committee, whose charge is to oversee the gathering of data and artifacts for our yearly assessment cycle.

World And Multicultural Literature (2000-Level)

Goal Description

Students will be exposed to the works of representative writers of various cultures and to universal themes and common concerns of literature. Students will have an opportunity to facilitate the social, political, and religious tenets reflected in the primary works read.

Related Items/Elements

Demonstrating Knowledge In World And Multicultural Literature

Learning Objective Description

Students will read and articulate their understanding of basic concepts and approaches to world and multicultural literature.

Assessing 2000-level Writing

Indicator Description

Reading and writing are part and parcel of each other. Essays written to analyze and/or apply literary texts suggest the depth and quality of the students' reading, as well as their understanding of the assignment. Thus, during the spring 2015 semester, we will collect writing samples of students enrolled in 2000-level (sophomore-level) classes and examine them to ascertain the effectiveness of reading that they evince. We anticipate collecting samples at random from approximately 15% of the students enrolled in ENGL 2332 and ENGL 2333.

Criterion Description

50% of sophomore students in ENGL 2332 and ENGL 2333 will meet the departmental criteria for academic writing that reflects critical thinking and good editing.

To assess the effectiveness of student writing abilities, English faculty will conduct an annual holistic review of representative essays produced across all sections of ENGL 2332 (World Literature I: Before the Seventeenth Century) and ENGL 2333 (World Literature II: The Seventeenth-Century and After).

NOTE: These course numbers represent a renumbering to conform with Core requirements. Formerly, ENGL 2332 was ENGL 2331 and ENGL 2332 was ENGL 2342. We have combined our reading of student papers from these two courses because either will serve to meet Core requirements, and 2332 is not prerequisite for 2333.

Holistic Scoring Procedures

1. To assure that the assessment reviews a representative sampling of writing, teachers of ENGL 2332 and 2333 sections in Spring 2015 were asked to submit a final paper significant writing from 3-4 students in each section, with these students selected at random by the department's secretarial staff. Submitted papers represent some 15% of students enrolled. (See attached memo to ENGL 2332 and 2333 instructors.)
2. Two primary readers from among the English faculty at all levels (tenure/tenure-track, lecturer, and Graduate Assistants) independently read and score each essay under review; in the case of an unreliable result, the essay is referred to a secondary (i.e., a third) reader, who reads the essay independently, without any knowledge of the previous results (see number 5, below).
3. Each primary reader scores each essay on a 4-point scale, with a score of 4 the highest possible. The two primary scores are added to yield a total, with the final scores ranging from 8 (highest possible) to 2 (lowest possible). A combined score of 5 or higher is passing. A score of 7 or 8 indicates an excellent essay; a score of 5 or 6 indicates an acceptable essay; a score of 4 or less indicates an unacceptable essay.
4. Reliability of the two scores is assumed when both scores from the primary readers are congruent, that is, when they are within 1 point of each other. For example, a score of 6 that would be seen as reliable would mean that both readers marked the essay as a 3. A reliable score of 5 would mean that one reader assessed the essay as a 3 while the other reader assessed it as a 2.
5. Should the primary scores for an essay not be reliable—for example, a 4 and a 1, a 3 and a 1, a 4 and a 2—the essay is referred to a secondary reader. If that reader agrees with the higher score, the essay is certified as acceptable or excellent; if the secondary reader agrees with the lower score, the essay is certified as unacceptable.

Findings Description

77.14% of the papers scored were assessed as having met the departmental criteria for critical thinking and good editing. Thus, we met our goal for this assessment. Below is a listing of the overall scoring of essays (N = 35)

(excellent essay) = 6
 (competent essay) = 21
 (unsatisfactory essay) = 8

Action Description

Much of our assessment is dependent on gathering good artifacts for evaluation and scoring. However, we are still not getting the samples that we need. Therefore, the department will appointment a committee, whose charge is to oversee the gathering of data and artifacts for our yearly assessment cycle.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement**Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify)**

Although the department wishes to continue many of our current practices that our successful, it recognizes that there are areas that need to be re-thought, revised, and re-evaluated. In the upcoming year we are going to address a number of issues and take the following actions: 1) Have a full BA curriculum review and make updates to our current curriculum. 2) Due to declining numbers in the major, our recruitment and retention committee will actively implement recruiting initiatives to increase numbers. 3) With the increase demand for online coursework, the department will make decisions on what role online learning has in our department and to what degree we should alter current offerings to increase our online presence. 4) The department will find ways, both through curricula and through future hiring, to increase diversity in our department. The department believes these are major areas where we can improve and better serve student needs and make the program more attractive to potential students. In addition, the department will use tenure and tenure-track faculty to teach some sections of Composition courses. This assignment will be conducted on a rotating basis that will be fair to both adjunct and tenured faculty.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

The following are updates of progress in the previous PCI:

- 1) The curriculum committee did not meet during the previous cycle; however, a new committee has been formed and undergraduate curriculum will be reviewed.
- 2)The current strategy for recruiting will be stronger promotion of the department at the university level.
- 3) Strategies for diversity hires are still being discussed.

Plan**Closing Summary**

Because the major issue regarding the BA in English is declining majors and minors, our current PCI will focus on this issue. We are planning the following measures:

- 1) Revise curriculum to better align with student interest, while still retaining program philosophy and standards.
 - 2) Expanding the program's emphasis on undergraduate research and study abroad opportunities.
 - 3) Establishing more opportunities for student engagement. We feel that building a community among our students will help retention and recruitment.
 - 4) Establishing better ways to highlight student achievements across campus.
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Assessment Plan Summary
Department: English MA

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

English, Department of

English MA

1. Critical Writing, Researching, And Thinking Skills

Goal Description

One primary goal of the English MA program at Sam Houston State University is to produce graduates who have acquired measurable skills in critical thinking, researching, and writing about English literature, language, and writing disciplines. While the number of graduates who have entered PhD programs or taken teaching positions at two- and four-year colleges is an objective measure of our success in accomplishing this goal, not all of our students pursue further graduate degrees or post-secondary teaching. That in mind, the department has determined three measurable learning objectives that apply uniformly to all students taking a graduate degree in English from Sam Houston State University: (1) the demonstration of critical thinking, researching, and writing skills, as measured by their Class Writing; (2) the demonstration of critical thinking and writing skills, as measured by their performance on the Written Comprehensive Examination; and (3) the demonstration of critical thinking skills, as measured by their performance in oral examinations (Oral Comprehensive Examination or Oral Defense of the Thesis).

Related Items/Elements

 1. Demonstration of Critical Abilities: Class Writing

Learning Objective Description

English graduate students will demonstrate their abilities as independent critical thinkers, researchers, and writers capable of employing sophisticated skills in written analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of knowledge and of using a professional idiom in making written arguments. The program's success in achieving this objective will be measured by a holistic assessment of graduate class writing.

 1. Performance in Class Writing as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities

Indicator Description

The ability of students to write according to accepted professional standards is a direct indicator of the English MA and MFA programs' success in producing graduates who have acquired appropriate critical thinking, researching, and writing skills and are prepared for future professional endeavors. To that end, a significant amount of student writing is required in English graduate coursework.

To assess the effectiveness of class writing assignments in developing students' ability to make sophisticated arguments about literature, language, and writing

disciplines in a critical idiom appropriate to professional standards, the faculty undertake an annual holistic review of representative graduate student writing produced during the reporting period.

Professors in graduate classes submit a term paper from every third student on their class rosters; although the number of samples is smaller or larger according to the number of courses taught in a given semester, the sampling represents a broad cross-section of students because it is random. One of the problems with representation, however, is that different sorts of graduate courses require different kinds of assignments. To help with the assessment, then, professors are required to submit the assignments; writing is evaluated not only by the standards that govern the profession but also by its success in fulfilling specific assignments.

Criterion Description

At least 92% of representative graduate essays evaluated during the holistic assessment will be scored as acceptable or excellent (a combined score of 5 or higher on the scale described below). A rubric for evaluating graduate student writing is attached. Assessment Process: 1. To assure that the assessment reviews a representative sampling of writing, graduate professors in both long terms are asked to submit term papers or other significant writing from every third student listed on their class rosters. 2. Two primary readers from among the graduate English faculty independently read and score each essay under review; in the case of an unreliable result, the essay is referred to a secondary reader, who reads the essay independently, without any knowledge of the previous results (see number 5, below) 3. Each primary reader scores each essay on a 4-point scale, with a score of 4 the highest possible. The two primary scores are added to yield a total, with the final scores ranging from 8 (highest possible) to 2 (lowest possible). A combined score of 5 or higher is passing. A score of 7 or 8 indicates an excellent essay; a score of 5 or 6 indicates an acceptable essay; a score of 4 or less indicates an unacceptable essay. 4. Reliability of the two scores is assumed when both scores from the primary readers are congruent, that is, when they are within 1 point of each other. For example, a score of 6 that would be seen as reliable would mean that both readers marked the essay as a 3. A reliable score of 5 would mean that one reader assessed the essay as a 3 while the other reader assessed it as a 2. 5. Should the primary scores for an essay not be reliable—for example, a 4 and a 1, a 3 and a 1, a 4 and a 2—the essay is referred to a secondary reader. If that reader agrees with the higher score, the essay is certified as acceptable or excellent; if the secondary reader agrees with the lower score, the essay is certified as unacceptable; if the secondary reader's score falls in the middle of two extremes, the average of the three scores determines the outcome.



Holistic Grading Rubric

Findings Description

In July 2017, a committee of five English MA faculty members assessed a total of eighteen representative essays taken from seven graduate courses taught during the 2016-2017 academic year. The essays covered a broad range of approaches and topics in English literature and language. The assessment committee assigned the following combined scores:

Combined score of 5 (acceptable): 1 (6%)

Combined score of 6 (acceptable): 6 (33%)

Combined score of 7 (excellent): 6 (33%)

Combined score of 8 (excellent): 5 (28%)

One hundred percent of essays were assessed as acceptable or excellent, with 39% deemed as acceptable and 61% deemed as excellent. The level of English MA writing exceeded the 92% standard for acceptable writing.

Graduate Student Writing

Action Description

Although 100% of the student essays reviewed for the 2016-2017 assessment cycle were rated as acceptable or excellent, the importance of critical writing as a measure of success in achieving the goals and objectives of the English MA program requires continued attention. As a result of the recently undertaken external review of the program, the faculty have begun an overhaul of the graduate curriculum, which will involve both new degree requirements and the installment of new courses. The MA faculty are particularly concerned that research and critical writing are purposefully integrated into all new course plans, as reflected in forthcoming proposals; that instructors agree upon standards of competency for writing in the profession; and that students are made aware of these standards in their courses, especially as exemplified by models of critical research writing.

2. Demonstration of Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge: Written Comprehensive Examination

Learning Objective Description

English students will demonstrate that they have a graduate-level breadth of knowledge in literature, language, and writing disciplines and that they can express that knowledge in writing. The program's success in achieving this objective can be measured by the pass rate for the written comprehensive examination required of all students who take a graduate English degree at Sam Houston State University.

2. Comprehensive Examination Pass Rate as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description

A passing score on the written comprehensive examination is a direct indicator that a student in English has acquired a breadth of knowledge in the subject, has developed critical reading and writing skills appropriate to a graduate-level education in English, and is well-prepared for future professional endeavors. For the examination, students choose three comprehensive areas from among thirteen broad topics in literature, language, and writing disciplines. To demonstrate their mastery of a broad range of materials, they are required to choose at least one British literature area and one American literature area and at least one early (pre-1800) British or American literary area and one later (post-1800) British or American literary area. For each area, students are given a reading list of works selected by faculty area experts.

During the exam itself, the student chooses one of three questions for each area and has two hours to respond to that question. A double-blind grading system is used to evaluate the candidates' proficiency. Three graduate faculty members read and evaluate each essay.

Essays are evaluated according to standards outlined in the attached grading rubric. It is not possible otherwise to set an indicator for each area.

Criterion Description

At least 90% of examination essays will pass (with a grade of pass or high pass).

An examination grading rubric and sample pass, fail, and high pass essays are attached.



Grading Rubric Written Exam



Sample Fail Comprehensive Exam Essay



Sample High Pass Comprehensive Exam Essay



Sample Pass Comprehensive Exam Essay

Findings Description

During Academic Year 2016-2017, English MA students wrote a total of thirty-six comprehensive examination essays. The results are as follow:

High Pass: 5 (14%)

Pass: 30 (83%)

Fail: 1 (3%)

The combined pass rate of 97% exceeds the standard of 90%.

**Written Comprehensive Examination****Action Description**

For the first time in several years, the results of the written comprehensive examination (97% pass rate) far exceed the standard (90% pass rate). While this may be a consequence, in part, of having

excluded MFA students and counting only MA students for this assessment cycle, the importance of the comprehensive exams in measuring the program's success in fulfilling its current goals and objectives requires continued attention. As long as the existing examination system is in place, the graduate director will continue to prepare students by making sure that they are well-informed about the exam processes and by having faculty conduct prep sessions. That having been said, as a result of the recently undertaken external review of the program and the decision to revise the curriculum and degree requirements, a comprehensive examination reassessment committee has been formed to explore and submit proposals for alternatives to the existing exam system that would better measure our success in fulfilling goals and objectives. The committee will begin its reassessment in Fall

3. Demonstration of Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge: Oral Examination

Learning Objective Description

English graduate students will demonstrate their knowledge and critical thinking skills through oral arguments. We believe that the ability to make such arguments is necessary for future professional pursuits like teaching and further graduate education. The program's success in achieving this objective can be measured by the pass rate for the oral defense required of all thesis students and the oral comprehensive examination required of all non-thesis students.

3. Oral Examination Pass Rate as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description

A passing grade on the oral examination required of all students who take the English MA or MFA degree at Sam Houston State University is a direct indicator that graduates are able to demonstrate their critical thinking skills and breadth of knowledge in the field. Thesis students sit for a one-hour oral defense of the thesis; having passed the written comprehensive examination, non-thesis students sit for a one-hour oral comprehensive examination covering the same three areas as those on the written exam. A committee of three graduate faculty members examines each student, awarding the candidate a pass, high pass, or fail, according to her or his ability to respond to specific questions. The committee for the oral defense of thesis comprises the members of the student's reading committee; the oral comprehensive examination committee comprises area experts appointed by the Graduate Director.

Criterion Description

At least 92% of degree candidates will pass the oral defense of thesis or oral comprehensive exam at the first sitting or upon retaking it. Assessment rubrics for the oral comprehensive examination and thesis defense are attached.

 Grading Rubric Oral Exam

 Grading Rubric Thesis Defense

Findings Description

During the 2016-2017 academic year, three English MA students sat for the oral defense of thesis; all three passed the defense successfully, with one of them earning a high pass.

During the 2016-2017 academic year, nine English MA students sat for the oral comprehensive examination. Eight of them passed the exam successfully on their first attempts. One of the students failed the exam on her first attempt, in Fall 2016, but successfully passed the retake in Spring 2017.

One-hundred percent of MA students passed their oral examinations.

 Oral Examination
Action Description

Despite the continued success rate of MA students in passing both the oral defense of thesis and the oral comprehensive exam, the reports of faculty who serve on oral comprehensive examination committees suggest some continued disappointment with students' abilities to formulate creditable oral responses to questions about literature and language. This can be explained, in part, by reasons other than a lack of knowledge in the field. However, in light of the findings of the recent external review, and corresponding with the reassessment of the written comprehensive examination, the graduate faculty will reassess the oral comprehensive examination to determine whether it best measures the program's success in fulfilling its goals and objectives.

2. Breadth of Knowledge in the Field**Goal Description**

A second primary goal of the English MA program is to produce students who have a graduate-level breadth of knowledge in literature, language, and writing disciplines and who are able to express that knowledge in writing. One measurement of the program's success in accomplishing this goal is the students' completion of five Block Courses in good standing; another is their satisfactory performance on the Written Comprehensive Examination.

Related Items/Elements
 2. Demonstration of Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge: Written Comprehensive Examination
Learning Objective Description

English students will demonstrate that they have a graduate-level breadth of knowledge in literature, language, and writing disciplines and that they can express that knowledge in writing. The program's success in achieving this objective can be measured by the pass rate for the written comprehensive examination required of all students who take a graduate English degree at Sam Houston State University.

 2. Comprehensive Examination Pass Rate as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description

A passing score on the written comprehensive examination is a direct indicator that a student in English has acquired a breadth of knowledge in the subject, has developed critical reading and writing skills appropriate to a graduate-level education in English, and is well-prepared for future professional endeavors. For the examination, students choose three comprehensive areas from among thirteen broad topics in literature, language, and writing disciplines. To demonstrate their mastery of a broad range of materials, they are required to choose at least one British literature area and one American literature area and at least one early (pre-1800) British or American literary area and one later (post-1800) British or American literary area. For each area, students are given a reading list of works selected by faculty area experts.

During the exam itself, the student chooses one of three questions for each area and has two hours to respond to that question. A double-blind grading system is used to evaluate the candidates' proficiency. Three graduate faculty members read and evaluate each essay.

Essays are evaluated according to standards outlined in the attached grading rubric. It is not possible otherwise to set an indicator for each area.

Criterion Description

At least 90% of examination essays will pass (with a grade of pass or high pass).

An examination grading rubric and sample pass, fail, and high pass essays are attached.



Grading Rubric Written Exam



Sample Fail Comprehensive Exam Essay



Sample High Pass Comprehensive Exam Essay



Sample Pass Comprehensive Exam Essay

Findings Description

During Academic Year 2016-2017, English MA students wrote a total of thirty-six comprehensive examination essays. The results are as follow:

High Pass: 5 (14%)

Pass: 30 (83%)

Fail: 1 (3%)

The combined pass rate of 97% exceeds the standard of 90%.



Written Comprehensive Examination

Action Description

For the first time in several years, the results of the written comprehensive examination (97% pass rate) far exceed the standard (90% pass rate). While this may be a consequence, in part, of having

excluded MFA students and counting only MA students for this assessment cycle, the importance of the comprehensive exams in measuring the program's success in fulfilling its current goals and objectives requires continued attention. As long as the existing examination system is in place, the graduate director will continue to prepare students by making sure that they are well-informed about the exam processes and by having faculty conduct prep sessions. That having been said, as a result of the recently undertaken external review of the program and the decision to revise the curriculum and degree requirements, a comprehensive examination reassessment committee has been formed to explore and submit proposals for alternatives to the existing exam system that would better measure our success in fulfilling goals and objectives. The committee will begin its reassessment in Fall

3. Demonstration of Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge: Oral Examination

Learning Objective Description

English graduate students will demonstrate their knowledge and critical thinking skills through oral arguments. We believe that the ability to make such arguments is necessary for future professional pursuits like teaching and further graduate education. The program's success in achieving this objective can be measured by the pass rate for the oral defense required of all thesis students and the oral comprehensive examination required of all non-thesis students.

3. Oral Examination Pass Rate as Indicator of Students' Critical Abilities and Breadth of Knowledge

Indicator Description

A passing grade on the oral examination required of all students who take the English MA or MFA degree at Sam Houston State University is a direct indicator that graduates are able to demonstrate their critical thinking skills and breadth of knowledge in the field. Thesis students sit for a one-hour oral defense of the thesis; having passed the written comprehensive examination, non-thesis students sit for a one-hour oral comprehensive examination covering the same three areas as those on the written exam. A committee of three graduate faculty members examines each student, awarding the candidate a pass, high pass, or fail, according to her or his ability to respond to specific questions. The committee for the oral defense of thesis comprises the members of the student's reading committee; the oral comprehensive examination committee comprises area experts appointed by the Graduate Director.

Criterion Description

At least 92% of degree candidates will pass the oral defense of thesis or oral comprehensive exam at the first sitting or upon retaking it. Assessment rubrics for the oral comprehensive examination and thesis defense are attached.

 Grading Rubric Oral Exam

 Grading Rubric Thesis Defense

Findings Description

During the 2016-2017 academic year, three English MA students sat for the oral defense of thesis; all three passed the defense successfully, with one of them earning a high pass.

During the 2016-2017 academic year, nine English MA students sat for the oral comprehensive examination. Eight of them passed the exam successfully on their first attempts. One of the students failed the exam on her first attempt, in Fall 2016, but successfully passed the retake in Spring 2017.

One-hundred percent of MA students passed their oral examinations.

 Oral Examination**Action Description**

Despite the continued success rate of MA students in passing both the oral defense of thesis and the oral comprehensive exam, the reports of faculty who serve on oral comprehensive examination committees suggest some continued disappointment with students' abilities to formulate creditable oral responses to questions about literature and language. This can be explained, in part, by reasons other than a lack of knowledge in the field. However, in light of the findings of the recent external review, and corresponding with the reassessment of the written comprehensive examination, the graduate faculty will reassess the oral comprehensive examination to determine whether it best measures the program's success in fulfilling its goals and objectives.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement**Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify)**

1. Graduate Writing: The Graduate Director distributed the rubric of standards for writing excellence to graduate faculty before the beginning of this reporting period. Nonetheless, graduate-level critical and research writing in 2015-2016 fell far short of the 92% acceptable-excellence rating. There may some explanations for this deficiency (as, for example, the range of essay types among the representative samples, including in-class examinations). In 2016-2017, however, the department must give particular attention to expectations for graduate writing and to the best means for raising the quality of this writing uniformly.
2. Oral Examination: Because 100% of MA students who sat for the oral comprehensive examination and oral thesis defense passed the oral component of their degree, with 57% of those receiving high passes, no further action for achieving this goal is planned at this time. We will, of course, continue to record and assess the results of the oral examinations.
3. Written Comprehensive Examinations: The 77% pass rate for individual comprehensive examination essays fell short of the 92% goal; because 100% of the students who sat for the exam eventually passed, however, failure to meet the 92% goal may not be problematic. Of greater importance is our continued assessment of how well the comprehensive examinations measure the

our continued assessment of how well the comprehensive examinations measure the program's success in producing students with graduate-level/professional critical reading and writing skills and breadth of knowledge. A review of the expectations and format of the exams is more crucial to our continuous improvement than is the pass rate. To that end, a previously appointed committee of five graduate faculty members will meet this coming academic year to consider how effectively the written and oral exams serve to measure our success in accomplishing the program goals. Of particular concern are the expectations for English MFA students: While students in the relatively new MFA program have been required to sit for the same comprehensive examinations as MA students, the committee will consider any exam format changes that may be necessary to measure more accurately the knowledge and skills of all English graduate students. Having discussed the expectations and format of the written and oral examinations, the review committee will make a formal report to the graduate faculty. If it finds the need for any changes to exam formats, it will make formal proposals to that effect. Any such changes must be approved by the majority of English graduate faculty.

4. Recruitment: The most important issue facing the English graduate program is the recruitment of qualified students. During the 2016-2017 academic year, the Department of English will undertake a comprehensive review of the program and determine the best plan of action for reinvigorating graduate applications and enrollments, which have remained flat over the last couple of years. Faculty have suggested several possibilities, one of which is a program on line, either in whole or in part.

5. Certificate Program for Dual Credit Teaching: For the summer of 2016, an eighteen-hour online certification program for public high school teachers of dual credit classes was proposed by the Department of English and approved by the University. Although the program was put together too hastily to begin in Summer 2016, the Department will advertise it more vigorously during the upcoming academic year, with the intention of launching its first cohort students in the first summer session of 2017. Our incoming Chair, Dr. Jacob Blevins, has recommended that we review carefully the particular coursework offered in this certificate program before the first classes are put on line in Summer 2017.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

Since the last assessment cycle, the English graduate faculty have undertaken an extensive review of the MA program; this included an external review by two professors from outside universities. The comprehensive review looked closely at all of the features identified in the previous cycle's plan for continuous improvement.

In response to our own findings of the self-study and those of the external reviewers, the MA faculty developed a strategic plan for addressing many of the program issues identified in the 2015-2016 assessment continuous plan. The response to the comprehensive review is attached here; included is that strategic plan.

As updates to specific features of the previous cycle's plan for continuous improvement, we report the following:

1. Graduate Writing: English graduate student critical and research writing for the 2015-2016 assessment cycle fell below the standard of 92% acceptable-excellent ranking; these results were not alarming enough to cause concern, but they did warrant closer monitoring of graduate-level writing, especially as it fulfills the goals and objectives of the English MA program. The results of the holistic review of graduate-level writing for the 2016-2017 assessment cycle deemed 100% of the essays under review to be acceptable or excellent. While certain variables like the kinds of

writing assignments and class objectives likely affect the results in a given academic year, we are satisfied that the quality of graduate-level writing meets the standards that we have established. Because of the importance of writing as a measure of our success in meeting the goals and objectives, however, we will continue to monitor our graduate students' writing closely.

2. Oral Examination: Because 100% of MA students who sat for the oral comprehensive examination and oral defense of thesis in the 2015-2016 assessment cycle passed their examinations, we did not institute a formal plan for improvement of this degree component. In the 2016-2017 assessment period, a single student failed the oral comprehensive examination on her first attempt. Because she passed all sections of the exam upon retaking it, however, we see this failure as an anomaly. There is no plan for continuous improvement in this area although, as before, we will continue to assess the results in light of program goals and objectives.

3. Written Comprehensive Examinations: All English MA and MFA students sit for the written comprehensive exam, as required by both degree programs, and past results have combined students from both programs. Because of the increasing separation of program goals and requirements, however, we selected out only MA students in the results for the 2016-2017 assessment cycle. Excluding MFA students this time, we found that 97% of essays from MA students earned either a pass or a high pass, with a single essay failing. These results are encouraging. However, because of the crucial role of the comprehensive exams in measuring the success of the MA program in fulfilling its goals and objectives, we continue to prepare students for the exam and to monitor the results closely.

4. Recruitment: As one feature of the extensive review of the English MA program in 2016-2017, including an external review conducted by two professors from outside universities, the graduate faculty developed a strategic plan, which included a calendar of projected actions. By May 2018, the MA program will have developed a coherent recruitment and marketing plan. Among other initiatives, we will develop a teacher-alumni advisory board, by which MA graduates who now teach in local high schools and junior colleges cannot only advise the program on the practical needs of MA graduates but also help recruit new qualified MA students.

For Fall 2017, thanks in part to the redoubled efforts of graduate faculty in recruiting qualified MA students from our own undergraduate ranks, we have ten new students entering the program, eight in regular admission status and two in probationary status.

5. Certificate Program for Dual Credit Teaching: The new online dual credit teaching certificate program received official approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and has begun offering classes for Fall 2017, with a first cohort of six students. Because this program is our first experiment with an exclusively online program, albeit a certificate program as opposed to a full MA degree program, we will closely monitor and assess our success with it, not only in preparing qualified students for dual credit teaching but also in recruiting future students.

PCI

Closing Summary

Based on the our recent external and internal program review, our plan for continuous improvement consists of the following:

- 1) Re-focus recruiting strategies to our undergraduate population and to area teachers.
- 2) Update our course offerings and curriculum to address external reviewer concerns and faculty resources.
- 3) Update our current exam and thesis assessments to better reflect student needs and current professional trends.

Department of History

Assessment Plan Summary
Department: History BA/BS

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

History, Department of

History BA/BS

BA Graduate Preparation

Goal Description

History BA graduates often seek to teach. In addition, all History BA graduates should possess certain analytical skills best evinced by the historical research process. As appropriate, the department will monitor student preparation for teaching certification and, in general, student mastery of history-thinking skills.

Related Items/Elements

 **History Research And Thinking Skills**

Learning Objective Description

History students will demonstrate specific history thinking and research skills through the writing of finished history research projects.

 Senior Level Student Learning Outcome Assessments

Indicator Description

During the course of the semester, students enrolled in 4000-level (senior level) courses will demonstrate mastery of historical scholarship and writing skills, as determined by a panel of history faculty.

A panel of two faculty members will select at random a sample of at least one-quarter of the total of 4000-level final research papers and scrutinize them according to an assessment instrument. This is the instrument perfected in previous years by panels of 4000-level evaluators and can be modified every year by that year's panel.

Criterion Description

The rubric specifies four areas: Thesis; Evidence; Documentation; and Organization. The benchmark of success is an average score of 3.5/5 on each and a score of 14 overall.

Findings Description

A sample of 12 papers (one quarter of the fall semester) received average scores

of 3.75 on each criterion and 15 overall. The spring semester papers will be scored in August.

Research and Thinking Skills Action

Action Description

The Department of History will cease to use this assessment method/matrix and will streamline/reform its undergraduate program to fit its changing student profile

History Teacher Certification Preparation

Learning Objective Description

To equip would-be public school history teachers with the skills to pass the Texas state examination for certification.

TEXES Examination

Indicator Description

Teacher education students who major or minor in History will pass the TExES examination.

Students who major in History and minor in secondary education must pass a state examination in History (or Social Studies) to be certified to teach in Texas. The School of Education informs each of these students of their obligation to take the "TExES" test. Generally a third of all History majors have this minor.

Passage of the TExES by a score of 80% qualifies the graduate to teach in Texas schools.

To qualify to take the TExES test, a student must score 80% on an official practice test. This test is furnished to the department by the Texas Education Agency. As of February 2015, both the History and Social Studies tests are new. The department administers the practice tests and furnishes scores to the School of Education, which in turn informs the students if they are qualified to take the final test.

Criterion Description

70% of all teacher education students who major or minor in History will pass the TEXES history examination with at least a score of 80%.

Findings Description

In 2016-17, 12 of 17 History students passed the TExES History test with a score of at least 70%, a rate of 71%. 6 of 16 passed the Social Studies test, a rate of 38%.

Research and Thinking Skills Action

Action Description

The Department of History will cease to use this assessment method/matrix and will streamline/reform its undergraduate program to

Skills In And Knowledge Of History

Goal Description

B.A. History graduates will be prepared for successful careers and productive citizenship by gaining ample knowledge and skills in departmental courses.

Related Items/Elements

Learning Outcomes

Learning Objective Description

To expose students, especially during their lower level classes, to various methods of teaching and intellectual stimuli all promoting key historical thinking skills.

Students will have multiple pedagogical experiences designed to ascertain which forms produce best results.

Self- And Instructor Evaluations In History Core Curriculum

Indicator Description

Students will have multiple pedagogical experiences designed to ascertain which forms produce best results. We will sample a group of students representing 5% of our total 1300-level students in a study. The faculty selected for this exercise are those teaching multiple sections of HIST 1301/2 of similar size.

In the Fall of 2014, two sections of HIST 1301 were employed in an experiment. Using one section as a control, a comparison was made to an identically populated related section. (This was repeated in Spring 2015 using HIST 1302.) The following methods were used in the test section:

1. Reduction of lecture in favor of interactive student research activity.
2. Frequent promotion of small-group and team co-operative learning.
3. Use of Jeopardy-style gaming to promote information rehearsal.

Changes in assessments were:

1. Shift from memorization performance to researched essay responses.
2. Increased emphasis in grading expectations on appropriate use of critical thinking and analysis skills in addition to content recitation.
3. Provision of a consistent critical thinking and writing analysis rubric in preparation for all exams.

The traditionally taught course consisted of lecture and power point delivery assessed through short-answer and multiple-choice testing as is commonly practiced in freshman sections.

Success would be indicated by enhanced assessment performance from students in experimental sections.

Criterion Description

Testing outcomes will be compared. Success would be indicated by enhanced assessment performance from students in experimental sections. Because this is a new program objective, the specific amount of desired demonstrable performance is difficult to estimate.

Findings Description

In 2016-17, in the first control group, the pre-post-test increase was 8.63% and in the experimental group 14.21%. In the second control group, the pre-post-test increase was 18.17% and in the two experimental groups 6.81% and 9.53%. However, both experimental groups in the second example scored higher on the post-test vs. the control group.

Learning Outcomes Action

Action Description

The Department of History will cease to use this assessment method/matrix and will streamline/reform its undergraduate program to fit its changing student profile

Learning Outcomes: Tests

Learning Objective Description

Students will acquire relevant historical knowledge and the ability to put it to use.

Pre-Post Testing In History Core Curriculum

Indicator Description

Students enrolled in lower-level US history courses, by far the largest enrollments in the department's curriculum, will demonstrate an enhancement in historical knowledge over the course of the term. The department, consulting Texas norms, has devised pre-and post-tests based for this purpose.

Criterion Description

The department devised a new instrument (attached) of 25 questions, based on the norms the state of Texas has expressed for the introductory history courses mandated for every public university student. The department expects measurable improvement in the post-test results versus the pre-test, of at least 10%.

Findings Description

In 2016-17, students averaged 54% on the pre-test and 62% on the post-test, an improvement of 14.8%.

Pre-Post Testing Action

Action Description

The Department of History will cease to use the current Pre and Post tests and will develop a new assessment to fit its changing student and faculty profile.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

1. We shall introduce skill, and non-merely content-based classroom assessments.
2. We shall develop a plan of rolling out such assessments over the levels of our courses from the service/core courses through our major.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

2016-17 was a transitional year in the Department of History. The Department now has a new Chair, Associate Chair, and Graduate Director. The Department did not accomplish any of the stated goals in the previous PCI. The Department has spent the last year working to create a new system of committees and processes for governance and assessment.

2016–17 Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary

The Department of History will

1. develop a new assessment plan to fit the changing student and faculty profile better.
2. strive to build an intellectual community in the department.
3. develop a new teaching mentoring program for all its faculty.
4. streamline and reform its undergraduate program.
5. develop new Pre-Post tests.

Filter Criteria

Prepared by: Tama Hamrick

Start and End Dates Filter:

Start Date: 9/1/2016

End Date: 8/31/2017

Common Field Filters:N/A

Custom Field Filters:

Goal *No custom fields for this data type.*

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement *No custom fields for this data type.*

Plan for Continuous Improvement *No custom fields for this data type.*

Department of Political Science

Assessment Plan Summary
Department: Political Science MA

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

Political Science, Department of

Political Science MA

Written Comprehensive Exams

Goal Description

Students will gain knowledge and skills that are associated with advanced degrees in political science.

Related Items/Elements

 **Written Comprehensive Exams**

Learning Objective Description

Upon completion of the MA in Political Science program, students will be able to:

1. Explain the key features of methodology.
2. Evaluate political theories and discuss the significant research in one of the program's subject areas: American government, public administration, comparative politics, or international relations.

 **Written Comprehensive Exam Outcomes**

Indicator Description

We utilize written comprehensive exams as a tool for measuring graduate students' knowledge and skills. Prior to graduation, students complete two written comprehensive exams in areas relevant to their coursework. Exam questions are written by faculty with expertise in the students' areas of study and the questions are based on the comprehensive exam reading lists and the content of the overview courses (see department level goal of revise written comprehensive exam process for more information on the reading lists and overview courses). Students' exams are graded by at least two faculty members (more when possible) who have expertise in the areas of study pursued by students. Exams are assigned one of the following scores: high pass, pass, and no pass. If the two faculty members issue conflicting scores (e.g., pass and no pass), a third faculty member will be asked to score the exams and issue a final ruling.

Criterion Description

We expect that at least 80% of our students will pass their exams on the first attempt and that 100% of the students who have to take the exam a second time

will pass.

Findings Description

Four students graduated from the MA program in the past year. Three of the four students took comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exams are scored as high pass, pass, or fail. All three students passed their exams on the first attempt and all three students received scores of pass. One of the four students wrote a thesis and participated in a defense of the thesis. Her thesis defense performance was successful (i.e., she did not have to make any revisions as a results of her defense performance).

As noted in the response to the external review report (see department level assessment MA Program Review Results section), the department does not have the resources to offer a capstone course as a means of assessing graduate student learning objectives. Thus, comprehensive exams will continued to be administered. The current comprehensive exam system is insufficient for assessments purposes. The system is in need of more clear statements about student learning objectives and grading rubrics that reflect the objectives. .

Political Science MA Program Action

Action Description

We believe that the revisions to the core curriculum will positively affect the comprehensive exam structure. Specifically, the MA program director will work with MA faculty to systematize the comprehensive exam structure so that the questions directly reflect the material in the three required subfield courses (POLS 5330, POLS 5371, POLS 5373). During 2017-2018, MA faculty will work to develop a single set of objectives that governs the exam (on the whole) and more specific objectives regarding the specific subfield questions as well as detailed rubrics.

The MA Committee will identify two additional assessments tools beyond comprehensive exams to use when evaluating student learning outcomes.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

Department progress on student learning objectives and the political science graduate program

Note: The political science graduate program underwent an external review in spring of 2016. This coming year the new graduate co-directors will work with faculty to implement the suggestions offered by the external reviewers.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

The MA Program responded to the majority of the concerns set out in the external review report.

2016-2017 Plan for Continuous Improvement**Closing Summary**

We believe that the revisions to the core curriculum will positively affect the comprehensive exam structure. Specifically, the MA program director will work with MA faculty to systematize the comprehensive exam structure so that the questions directly reflect the material in the three required subfield courses (POLS 5330, POLS 5371, POLS 5373). During 2017-2018, MA faculty will work to develop a single set of objectives that governs the exam (on the whole) and more specific objectives regarding the specific subfield questions as well as detailed rubrics.

The MA Committee will identify two additional assessments tools beyond comprehensive exams to use when evaluating student learning outcomes.

Assessment Plan Summary**Department: Political Science BA/BS****Sam Houston State University****President, Office of****Academic Affairs, Division of****Humanities and Social Sciences, College of****Political Science, Department of****Political Science BA/BS****Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility****Goal Description**

Develop student skills and knowledge relevant to civic/political engagement.

Related Items/Elements

 **Develop Students Knowledge of Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility**

Learning Objective Description

Students will learn the skills and knowledge necessary to participate and engage in civic and political life at the local, state, and national levels of government.

 Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility Outcomes

Indicator Description

Students enrolled in 2305 American Government and 2306 Texas Government will complete pre/post tests designed to capture information about students learning progress on matters relevant to civic and political engagement.

Criterion Description

We expect to see significant differences between the pre and post tests scores.

Findings Description

A total of 774 students took the pre-test and a total of 535 students took the post-test for POLS 2306: Texas Government in spring 2017. The average student score increased from 41.45% on the pre-test to 52.61% on the post-test, for an increase of approximately 11% points.

A total of 882 students took the pre-test and a total of 654 students took the post-test for POLS 2305: American Government in fall 2016. The average student score increased from 75.84% on the pre-test to 82.54% on the post-test, for an increase of approximately 7% points.

The differences in the pre/posts test scores for both POLS 2306 and POLS 2305 were statistically significant.

See attached documents for further information regarding the results.

 POLS 2305 American Government Fall 2016 Report

 POLS 2306 Texas Government Spring 2017 Report

Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility

Action Description

The department is satisfied with the use and results of the pre/post-tests. However, the department has hired new faculty and adjuncts who are responsible for teaching 2305 American Government and 2306 Texas Government and the new hires need to be incorporated into discussions of how best to promote knowledge of civic engagement in 2305 and 2306.

Students' Skills

Goal Description

Faculty teaching POLS 3379 Research and Writing, a required course of all majors, will develop and implement a set of pedagogical approaches to be used by all faculty teaching 3379. A common set of pedagogical approaches across all sections of 3379 will better ensure that upon completion of the undergraduate program students will possess skills relevant to employment fields associated with the study of political science.

Related Items/Elements

Develop Students' Skills

Learning Objective Description

The pedagogical approach titled "Best in X" will be to improve students' abilities to analyze and present empirical data, explain key concepts of research design, and write coherent reports and research papers.

Student Skills Outcomes

Indicator Description

POLS 3379 Research and Writing is a required course. Faculty members who teach the course will receive and review 5 randomly selected papers POLS 3379 courses. Faculty members will review the papers using a rubric. Papers will be scored on a scale of 1 - 5 with 5 being the highest.

Criterion Description

We expect that 75% of the written assignments selected for committee review will receive a score of three or better.

Findings Description

Faculty teaching 3379 Research and Writing incorporated new activities into the course sections and developed a rubric for assignments in 3379. These two actions occurred over 2016 fall semester and 2017 spring semester. Faculty could not measure the effectiveness of pedagogical changes in part because the agreed upon rubric was not finalized until mid-way through the 2017 spring semester. Thus, this coming year will be the first year that the pedagogical changes and shared rubric can be fully implemented.

 Develop Students' Skills
Action Description

The new rubric will be used in the fall 2017 and spring 2018 3379 courses.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement
Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify)

Department progress on undergraduate student learning objectives

1. Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility: The pre-tests scores were high and there were not sufficient differences between the pre and post-tests in 2305 American Government and 2306 Texas Government courses. Faculty concluded that the questions on the tests were not difficult enough. Thus, the department's Undergraduate Committee/Curriculum Committee will revise the content of the tests.
2. Students' Skills: Overall faculty were pleased with the new assessment strategy implemented. Faculty felt the new strategy provided more detailed and accurate information about students' skills. Faculty were satisfied with students' skills in all areas except students' ability to understand and express relationships between concepts and data. Faculty teaching POLS 3379 will use peer review and in class activities this coming year in an effort to improve students' skills in the above noted area.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

1. The content of the pre- and post-tests were revised. The department is prepared to implement the revised instruments in 2017-2018.
2. The department did not achieve this objective. We identified a problem with the rubric. A corrected rubric was developed and will be deployed in 2017-2018.

2016-2017 Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary**Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility**

The department is satisfied with the use and results of the pre/post-tests. However, the department has hired new faculty and adjuncts who are responsible for teaching 2305 American Government and 2306 Texas Government and the new hires need to be incorporated into discussions of how best to promote knowledge of civic engagement in 2305 and 2306.

Develop Students' Skills

The new rubric will be used in the fall 2017 and spring 2018 3379 courses.

**Department of Psychology
and
Philosophy**

**Assessment Plan Summary
Department: Philosophy BA**

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

Psychology and Philosophy, Department of

Philosophy BA

Document Parity Between Online and In-person Courses

Goal Description

The Philosophy Program will provide assessment data demonstrating parity between the student learning outcomes of its on-line and in-person course offerings.

Related Items/Elements

 **Parity Between On-line and In-person Course Offerings**

Performance Objective Description

The Philosophy Program will gather and report data demonstrating that on-line and in-person sections of its courses provide comparable student learning outcomes.

 **Parity Between On-line and In-person Courses**

KPI Description

For courses that are offered in both on-line and in-person formats, the Philosophy Program will continue to report aggregate data on student learning outcomes.

The program will also report disaggregated data for on-line and in-person courses. The program will consider its efforts a success if all three data sets show the requisite improvement outlined for each learning objective.

Results Description

PHIL 1301

Whether looking at face-to-face students, on-line students, or all students aggregated, PHIL 1301 students met the criteria for success on one of the elements of knowledge of Kant (question 10) and failed to achieve the other (question 12).

Both face-to-face and on-line sections of PHIL 1301 met the criteria for success with respect to general improvement of students' knowledge of core concepts in philosophy.

PHIL 2303

In both face-to-face and online sections of PHIL 2303, the Program failed to achieve its goal with respect to student performance on calculating linked probabilities. After discussions with faculty in both on-line and in-person sections, it was discovered that some faculty had not made teaching this element of the course a priority.

While face-to-face sections of PHIL 2303 successfully improved student performance on the TACTS test, online sections did not.

PHIL 2306

Face-to-face sections of PHIL 2306 met the criteria for both elements of knowledge of the death penalty debate; however, on-line sections only met the criterion associated with question 20 and failed to meet the criterion associated with question 19.

Both face-to-face and on-line sections of PHIL 2306 met the criteria for success with respect to general improvement of students' knowledge of core concepts in philosophy.

Parity Between In-person and On-line Classes

Action Description

The initial set of disaggregated data shows that neither on-line nor in-person sections of our courses met all criteria for success, in-person sections achieved more of the criteria for success than on-line sections.

Because this is the first set of data to show these results, the Program will take a measured response to the findings. In response to the 2017-2018 results, the Program will conduct a series of meetings with all instructors to ensure that all faculty are aware of the expected outcomes from their courses. This has already been identified as an issue in both on-line and in-person sections of PHIL 2303. During these meetings, the Program will also have open discussions of other potential areas of improvement in our various courses. The program will continue to monitor the outcomes in in-person and on-line sections of its courses looking for patterns.

Improve the Granularity of Data from PHIL 2303 Assessment

Goal Description

The Philosophy Program will review the TACTS instrument used for PHIL 2303 assessment and identify specific elements that align with expected student learning outcomes in an effort to improve the granularity of assessment data.

Related Items/Elements

Identification of Specific Items on the TACTS for PHIL 2303 Assessment

Performance Objective Description

The Program will identify specific elements with the TACTS for direct item analysis that can disaggregate data on student performance in an effort to identify specific areas for

improvement with the PHIL 2303 courses. The Program expects to complete its review of the TACTS in time to begin assessing particular items during Fall 2017.

TACTS Item Analysis Review

KPI Description

The Philosophy Program will complete its review of the TACTS prior to the start of Fall 2017 courses. The Program will identify specific questions on the TACTS for item analyses that will aid the identification of specific areas for improvement. The Program will consider its efforts a success if it has completed the review and is able to report a list of elements that will be directly assessed during AY 2017-2018.

Results Description

The Program completed its review of the TACTS questions and identified 20 items that will be used for assessment going forward. The Program received permission from the TACTS' authors to create a new instrument that incorporates these 20 items. The final instrument was prepared and distributed to all PHIL 2303 faculty for administration in their Fall 2017 sections of PHIL 2303. This will allow the program to reduce the noisiness of the data it collects because the assessment instrument will no longer include questions that are unrelated to the identified student learning outcomes of the PHIL 2303 course.

Implementing Metacognition Instrument

Action Description

The Philosophy Program will administer the new combined critical thinking and metacognition instrument in all sections of PHIL 2303 during Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. This will replace the TACTS as the main assessment instrument for PHIL 2303.

Improving Critical Thinking And Analytic Reasoning

Goal Description

Students completing the critical thinking and logic courses in our curriculum will develop a broad-based skills in critical thinking and formal logic.

Related Items/Elements

Demonstrate Critical Thinking Skills

Learning Objective Description

Critical thinking skills are an essential component of philosophical work. Students will be able to analyze arguments and draw conclusions from available information.

Improved Calculation of Linked Probabilities

Indicator Description

Students will demonstrate an improvement in their ability to calculate linked probabilities from the start of the course to the end of the course, and students will demonstrate a skill level on this task that surpasses that of students in a

senior-level College of Business course.

Criterion Description

The percentage of students who correctly answer question 23 on the TACTS instrument will increase by at least 150% from the pre-test to the post-test.

Further, the percentage of students who correctly answer question 23 on the post-test will exceed 50%. This target was chosen because the creators of the TACTS report that less than 40% of students in a senior-level College of Business course answered question 23 correctly. The Program will consider its efforts to improve student performance in this area a success if students show substantial improvement and the end-of-course assessment shows that students in this general education course are performing better than senior-level students have historically performed.

Findings Description

Face-to-Face Results:

Among the 469 face-to-face students who took the pre-test, 73 (15.5%) answered question 23 correctly. Among the 434 students who took the post-test, 167 (38.4%) answered question 23 correctly. These results indicate an increase of 147% in the number of students who answered question 23 correctly. This result did not meet the criterion for success.

The post-test result that 38.4% of students answered question 23 correctly indicates that students completing this general education course did not do better on this task than historical senior-level business students. This result did not meet the criterion for success.

These results indicate a decline in performance from the previous year. In discussions with faculty, it was discovered that a faculty member teaching PHIL 2303 for the first time did not include a unit on linked probabilities for his 128 students. This may explain the decline in student performance.

Online Results:

Among the 34 online students who took the pre-test, 2 (5.9%) answered question 23 correctly. Among the 23 students who took the post-test, 4 (17.4%) answered question 23 correctly. These results indicate an increase of 195% in the number of students who answered question 23 correctly. This result did meet the criterion for success. However, the small number of students who correctly answered the question raises questions about the student learning outcome for this group of students in this area.

The post-test result that 17.4% of students answered question 23 correctly indicates that students completing this general education course did not do better on this task than historical senior-level business students. This result did not meet the criterion for success.

In discussions with faculty, it was discovered that the faculty member teaching PHIL 2303 online did not include a unit on linked probabilities for his students.

Linked Probabilities Action

Action Description

The program will undertake a series of program-wide meetings to

ensure that all faculty are teaching all required elements of Core Curriculum courses. The focus of these meetings will be to ensure that all faculty are aware of the expectations for each course.

Response Scores On TACTS

Indicator Description

All students who take PHIL 2303 will be tested on their critical thinking skills. All faculty who teach PHIL 2303 will administer the Texas Assessment of Critical Thinking Skill (TACTS), an externally validated test of critical thinking skills, in a pre-test/post-test format. The TACTS is a broad-based assessment of critical thinking skills that goes beyond the current scope of PHIL 2303. This will allow the faculty to determine areas that may be added to our current curriculum in the future. In addition, it allows for substantial flexibility in what is taught, thereby ensuring academic freedom for instructors to design individual sections around their own expertise and interests. A copy of the current TACTS is attached. A copy of the credited responses is attached. The Philosophy Program Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that all faculty who teach PHIL 2303 effectively administer the pre- and post-tests in every section of their course. Dr. Sanford will be responsible for gathering pre- and post-test data from the faculty members who teach PHIL 2303.

Criterion Description

A paired two-sample *t*-test will be performed on the scores of all students who take the pre-test and the post-test. The philosophy program expects to see a statistically significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test.

Findings Description

Face-to-Face Results

A parametric dependent samples *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre- to post-scores for students enrolled in face-to-face sections of PHIL 2303: Critical Thinking for the 2016-2017 academic year, $t(325) = -4.08, p < .001$. This difference represented a small effect size (Cohen's *d*) of 0.26 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 29.76% to 32.95%, for an increase of approximately 3%. Readers are directed to Table 1 in the attached PDF for a breakdown of these results.

On-line Results

For online students, a parametric dependent samples *t*-test did not reveal a statistically significant difference between the pre- to post-scores, $t(21) = -1.36, p = .19$. Readers are directed to Table 2 in the attached PDF for a breakdown of these results.

Combined Results

Finally, for both populations combined, a parametric dependent samples *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre- to post-scores for the 2016-2017 academic year, $t(347) = -4.26, p < .001$. This difference

represented a small effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.26 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 30.17% to 33.34%, for an increase of approximately 3%. Readers are directed to Table 3 in the attached PDF for a breakdown of these results.

Texas Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills 2016-2017 Report

TACTS Scores Action

Action Description

The Program will continue to monitor student learning outcomes in all sections of PHIL 2303. In addition, the Program will hold meetings with all faculty who teach PHIL 2303 to facilitate sharing of successful strategies for engaging students and improving outcomes. The focus of these meetings will be on improving performance in on-line sections of PHIL 2303.

Demonstrate Formal Logic Skills

Learning Objective Description

Formal reasoning is a highly regarded component of philosophical work. Students will be able to analyze formal arguments and construct formal proofs.

Formal Arguments and Proofs

Indicator Description

All students in PHIL 2352 will be tested on their knowledge of basic concepts in formal logic using a locally standardized pre-test and post-test for each section. Following a review of best practices for the teaching of these courses, a group of Program faculty chose the questions for the assessment. The questions asked cover the range of concepts that are taught in peer departments. Instruction on these concepts promotes a basic competence in analysis of formal arguments and construction of formal proofs. The attached document provide the assessment instrument for PHIL 2352.

Criterion Description

A paired two-sample t-test will be performed on the scores of all students who take the pre-test and the post-test. Students will demonstrate a statistically significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test.

Findings Description

The paired two-sample t-test showed significant improvement from the pre-test to the post test.

The pre- and post-test scores for all students are in the attached PDF named "PHIL 2352 Pre-Post Scores (2016-2017)." The attached PDF named "PHIL 2352 Pre-Post t-Test (2016-2017)" shows the descriptive statistics.

 PHIL 2352 Pre-Post Scores (2016-2017) PHIL 2352 Pre-Post t-Test (2016-2017) **Formal Logic Action****Action Description**

The Program will continue to monitor student performance in PHIL 2352 while it focuses its improvement efforts elsewhere.

 Develop Instrument for Assessing Metacognitive Judgement in PHIL 2303**Performance Objective Description**

The ability to evaluate one's own knowledge and skills is an essential part of critical thinking and decision making. In order to better understand this understudied component of critical thinking, the Program has encouraged Dr. Sanford and Dr. Wright to work with Jeff Roberts, SHSU's Director of Assessment, to advance their research in this area by promoting the development and future deployment of an instrument for assessing students' metacognitive performance.

 Development of an Instrument for Measuring Students' Metacognitive Abilities**KPI Description**

The Program will develop an instrument to assess students metacognitive abilities and intellectual humility as part of the PHIL 2303 course assessment.

These efforts will be considered successful if the Program is able to implement a metacognition and intellectual humility assessment instrument in Fall 2017.

Results Description

The Program was successful at developing an instrument that will allow for assessment of students metacognitive abilities and intellectual humility.

Combining elements of the instruments Dr. Wright and Dr. Sanford have been working on with items from the TACTS, the Program successfully developed an instrument that can assess critical thinking, metacognition, and intellectual humility. It will be used in all PHIL 2303 sections during 2017-2018.

 Implementing Metacognition Instrument**Action Description**

The Philosophy Program will administer the new combined critical thinking and metacognition instrument in all sections of PHIL 2303 during Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. This will replace the TACTS as the main assessment instrument for PHIL 2303.

Review/Revise Assessment Instrument for PHIL 1301**Goal Description**

Given that the program has used the same instrument for pre-test/post-test assessment in PHIL 1301

sections for several years, all faculty who currently teach this course will be invited to serve on a committee charged with reviewing (and revising, as necessary) this instrument to ensure adequate assessment of current controversies and pedagogical approaches. The committee will make a recommendation to the Program faculty. The Program faculty will act on these recommendations in adopting an instrument for future use in assessment of PHIL 1301 sections.

Related Items/Elements

Review of PHIL 1301 Assessment Instrument

Performance Objective Description

The Program faculty will undertake a review (and revision, if necessary) of the assessment instrument for PHIL 1301. This review will focus on ensuring shared learning outcomes across all sections, Core Curriculum requirements, and student preparation for upper-division philosophy courses.

Review/Revision of PHIL 1301 Assessment Instrument

KPI Description

The Program faculty are expected to complete a review of the assessment instrument for PHIL 1301 in time to allow for use of the revised instrument beginning in Fall 2017. The committee will revise the instrument by adding questions, removing questions, or rewriting questions as need to ensure that the items on the instrument align with expected student learning outcomes.

Results Description

A committee composed of Charles Carlson, Glenn Sanford, Tom Brommage, West Gurley, Frank Fair, Ben Mitchell-Yellin, and David Wright reviewed the existing instrument for assessing PHIL 1301.

Each member of the committee reviewed the exam with the aim of identifying questions that needed revisions or to be replaced and then filled out a survey with their responses. These surveys were compiled and the committee met to discuss the results. During this discussion 14 of the 20 questions were substantially revised, and one question was replaced with a new question.

The material covered in the revised exam cuts a broad swath, and both the structure of the questions and the available answers have been revised to improve clarity and reduce ambiguity.

Implementation of Revised PHIL 1301 Assessment Instrument

Action Description

The Philosophy Program will administer the newly revised assessment instrument in all sections of PHIL 1301 during Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.

Goal Description

Ensuring that students acquire a general understanding of basic philosophical concepts.

Related Items/Elements **Demonstrate Advanced Understanding Of History Of Philosophy****Learning Objective Description**

Well-educated philosophy students will demonstrate appreciation for the arguments and positions of earlier thinkers. Because so much of what is written in philosophy is a reaction to the metaphysical and epistemological presuppositions of earlier thinking, it is the core of well-rounded philosophical education.

 Pre-test Post-test Response Scores On Locally-Standardized Instruments (3364/3365)**Indicator Description**

All students in PHL 3364 and PHL 3365 will be tested on their knowledge of general concepts in the history of philosophy. All faculty who teach these courses will administer a pre-test and post-test to all students. All Philosophy BA students are required to take PHL 364 (Ancient and Medieval Philosophy) and PHL 365 (Modern Philosophy). Together, these courses provide students with upper-level instruction covering the history of metaphysics and epistemology. Following a review of best practices for the teaching of these courses, a group of Program faculty chose the questions for the assessment. The questions cover the range of concepts that are taught in peer departments. Instruction on these concepts promotes a well-rounded understanding of the history of philosophy.

Criterion Description

A paired two-sample t-test will be performed on the scores of all students who take the pre-test and the post-test. Students in both courses will demonstrate a statistically significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test.

Findings Description

The 10 students in PHIL 3364 who took both the pretest and posttest improved their average scores from 1.6 to 11.3 correct responses. This was a statistically significant improvement.

The 23 students in PHIL 3365 who took both the pretest and posttest improved their average scores from 1.9 to 12.9 correct responses. This was a statistically significant improvement.

The data and descriptive statistics for both classes are provided in the accompanying PDF's.

 PHIL 3364 Pre-Post Scores (2016-2017)

 PHIL 3364 Pre-Post t-Test (2016-2017)

 PHIL 3365 Pre-Post Scores (2016-2017)

 PHIL 3365 Pre-Post t-Test (2016-2017)

3364/3365 Action

Action Description

The Program will continue to monitor student performance in PHIL 3364/PHIL 3365 while it focuses its improvement efforts elsewhere.

Demonstrate Basic Understanding Of Core Concepts In Philosophy

Learning Objective Description

As students progress through the Philosophy BA, they will acquire a basic understanding of metaphysics, epistemology, and moral theory. This basic information, provided by our introductory courses serves as the foundation for student success in upper-division courses.

Improved Student Knowledge Of Kant

Indicator Description

Students will demonstrate increased understanding of Immanuel Kant's philosophy. Questions 10 and 12 on the pre-test and post-test were chosen to measure our Program faculty's ability to improve this targeted area.

Criterion Description

After comparing students' pre-test and post-test performance on questions 10 and 12 of those tests, the Program will consider this effort successful if the data indicate at least a 100% improvement in student performance on each question or at least 75% of students correctly answer these questions. Anything less will be taken as an indication that the Program must improve its performance in this area.

Findings Description

Face-to-Face Sections

In the PHIL 1301 in-person sections, 481 students took the pre-test and 263 took the post-test. The breakdown of student pretest/ post test performance on the Kant questions was:

Question 10: Pre-test correct: 138 (28.69%) Post-test correct: 179 (68.06%) 137.2% Improvement

Question 12: Pre-test correct: 206 (42.83%) Post-test correct: 191 (72.62%) 69.6% Improvement

Face-to-face student performance demonstrated success on question 10, but failed to meet the criterion for question 12.

On-line Students

In the PHIL 21301 online sections, 68 students took the pre-test and 71 took the post-test. The breakdown of student pretest/ post test performance on the Kant questions was:

Question 10: Pre-test correct: 16 (23.53%) Post-test correct: 40 (56.34%)
139.4% Improvement

Question 12: Pre-test correct: 38 (55.88%) Post-test correct: 42 (59.15%)
5.9% Improvement

On-line student performance demonstrated success on question 10, but failed to meet the criterion for question 12.

All Students

Overall, 549 students took the pre-test and 334 took the pos-ttest. The breakdown of student pretest/ post test performance on the Kant questions was:

Question 10: Pre-test correct: 154 (28.05%) Post-test correct: 219 (65.57%)
133.8% Improvement

Question 12: Pre-test correct: 244 (44.44%) Post-test correct: 233 (69.76%)
57.0% Improvement

Overall, student performance demonstrated success on question 10, but failed to meet the criterion for question 12.

 Kant Knowledge Action
Action Description

The Program will continue to monitor student learning outcomes in all sections of PHIL 1301. In addition, the Program will hold meetings with all faculty who teach PHIL 1301 to facilitate sharing of successful strategies for engaging students and improving outcomes. The focus of these meetings will be on improving performance in on-line sections of PHIL 1301.

 Improved Student Knowledge Of The Death Penalty Debate
Indicator Description

Students will demonstrate increased understanding of arguments related to the death penalty. Questions 19 and 20 on the pre-test and post-test were chosen to measure our Program faculty's ability to improve this targeted area.

Criterion Description

After comparing students' pre-test and post-test performance on questions 19 and 20 of those tests, the Program will consider this effort successful if the data indicate at least a 100% improvement in student performance on each question or at least 75% of students correctly answer these questions. Anything less will be

taken as an indication that the Program must improve its performance in this area.

Findings Description In-Person Students

In the PHIL 2306 in-person sections, 623 students took the pre-test and 502 took the post-test. The breakdown of student pre-test/post-test performance on the death penalty questions was:

Question 19: Pre-test correct: 374 (60.0%) Post-test correct: 386 (76.9%) 128.2% Improvement

Question 20: Pre-test correct: 490 (78.7%) Post-test correct: 459 (91.4%) 16.3% Improvement

The performance of in-person students met the program criteria for both questions.

On-line Students

In the PHIL 2306 on-line sections, 133 students took the pre-test and 108 took the post-test. The breakdown of student pre-test/post-test performance on the death penalty questions was:

Question 19: Pre-test correct: 86 (64.7%) Post-test correct: 73 (67.6%)
4.5% Improvement

Question 20: Pre-test correct: 109 (82.0%) Post-test correct: 93 (86.1%)
5.0% Improvement

The performance of on-line students met the program criterion for question 20, but failed to meet the program criterion for question 19.

All Students

Overall, 756 students took the pre-test and 610 took the post-test. The breakdown of student pre-test/post-test performance on the death penalty questions was:

Question 19: Pre-test correct: 460 (60.8%) Post-test correct: 459 (75.2%)
23.7% Improvement

Question 20: Pre-test correct: 599 (79.2%) Post-test correct: 552 (90.5%)
14.3% Improvement

Taken together, all PHIL 2306 students met the program criteria for both questions.

Death Penalty Debate Knowledge Action

Action Description

The Program will continue to monitor student learning outcomes in all sections of PHIL 2306. In addition, the Program will hold meetings with all faculty who teach PHIL 2306 to facilitate sharing of successful strategies for engaging students and improving outcomes. The focus of these meetings will be on improving performance in in-person and on-line sections of PHIL 2306.

Additionally, PHIL 2306 is scheduled to be the first Core Curriculum course that will be reviewed for content alignment. This alignment will look at the documentation submitted to the THECB when the course was included in the Core Curriculum, the assessment plan, and the content of individual sections that are taught by different instructors.



Statistically Significant Improvement Of Student Scores From Pre-test To Post-test (1301/2306)

Indicator Description

All students in PHIL 1301 and PHIL 2306 will be tested on their knowledge of basic concepts in metaphysics, epistemology, and moral theory using a locally standardized pre-test and post-test for each course. Following a review of best practices for the teaching of these courses, a group of Program faculty chose the questions for the assessment. The questions asked cover the range of concepts that are taught in peer departments. Instruction on these concepts promotes a basic competence in metaphysics, epistemology, and moral theory. The attached documents provide the assessment instruments for PHIL 1301 and PHIL 2306 as well as the credited responses for each.

Criterion Description

A paired two-sample *t*-test will be performed on the scores of all students who take the pre-test and the post-test. Students in both courses will demonstrate a statistically significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test.

Findings Description

PHIL 2306 Contemporary Moral Issues Findings

For face-to-face students, a non-parametric dependent samples *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference between in the pre- to post-scores for the 2016-2017 academic year $z = -14.25, p < .001$. This difference represented a large effect size (Cohen's *d*) of 0.95 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 56.71% to 68.91%, for an increase of approximately 12%. Readers are directed to Table 1 in the linked document for a breakdown of these results.

For online students, a parametric dependent samples *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference between in the pre- to post-scores for the 2016-2017 academic year, $t(98) = -9.40, p < .001$. This difference represented a large effect size (Cohen's *d*) of 0.95 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 56.65% to 69.70%, for an increase of approximately 13%. Readers are directed to Table 2 in the linked document for a breakdown of these results.

A parametric dependent samples *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference between in the pre- to post-scores for the combined face-to-face and

online populations of PHIL 2306: Contemporary Moral Issues for the 2016-2017 academic year, $t(533) = -21.15, p < .001$. This difference represented a large effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.95 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 56.70% to 69.06%, for an increase of approximately 13%. Readers are directed to Table 3 in the linked document for a breakdown of these results.

PHIL 1301 Introduction to Philosophy

A parametric dependent samples t -test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre- to post-scores for students enrolled in face-to-face sections of PHIL 1301: Introduction to Philosophy for the 2016-2017 academic year, $t(306) = -6.43, p < .001$. This difference represented a moderate effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.74 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 31.89% to 36.86%, for an increase of approximately 5%. Readers are directed to Table 1 in the linked document for a breakdown of these results.

For online students, a parametric dependent samples t -test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre- to post-scores for the 2016-2017 academic year, $t(52) = -7.52, p < .001$. This difference represented a large effect size (Cohen's d) of 1.36 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 37.74% to 59.72%, for an increase of approximately 22%. Readers are directed to Table 2 in the linked document for a breakdown of these results.

Finally, for both populations combined, a non-parametric dependent samples t -test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre- to post-scores for the 2016-2017 academic year, $z = -8.12, p < .001$. This difference represented a moderate effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.53 (Cohen, 1988). The average student score increased from 32.76% to 40.22%, for an increase of approximately 8%. Readers are directed to Table 3 in the linked document for a breakdown of these results.

 PHIL 1301 Introduction to Philosophy 2016-2017 Report

 PHIL 2306 Contemporary Moral Issues 2016-2017 Report

PHIL 1301/PHIL 2306 General Knowledge Action

Action Description

The Program will continue to monitor student performance in PHIL 1301/PHIL 2306 while it focuses its improvement efforts elsewhere.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

The Program is committed to undertaking several actions aimed at ensuring the quality of instruction and concomitant student learn outcomes. During 2016-2017, the Program will:

- 1) ask all faculty teaching PHIL 1301, 2303, and 2306 to share ideas concerning effective techniques for achieving student learning outcomes with respect to specific targeted areas;
- 2) implement improved data gathering in on-line sections of PHIL 2352;
- 3) conduct a review of the TACTS instrument used in PHIL 2303 in order to ensure alignment between the instrument, Core Curriculum requirements and future course offerings (As part of this review, the Program will identify specific questions from the instrument that align with course objectives in an effort to improve targeted assessment of PHIL 2303 offerings.);
- 4) will conduct a review of the PHIL 1301 assessment instrument in order to ensure alignment between the instrument, Core Curriculum requirements and future course offerings (As part of this review, the Program will identify specific questions from the instrument that align with course objectives in an effort to improve targeted assessment of PHIL 1301 offerings.);
- 5) will work with Professors Sanford and Wright, who will coordinate with Jeff Roberts, SHSU's Director of Assessment, to promote ongoing development of an instrument for assessing students' metacognitive capacities with respect to the skills taught in PHIL 2303; and
- 6) The Program will continue its efforts to assess the relative equivalence of on-line and in-person sections of all courses.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

The Program completed the following actions with respect to the 2015-2016 PCI:

- 1) Program faculty were asked to share ideas for improving outcomes in our Core Curriculum classes (1301/2303/2306). While there is no direct measure of the success of these efforts, the 2016-2017 findings related to Core classes indicates that the Program needs to implement a more formal discussion of course expectations.
- 2) The Program successfully gathered all required data for PHIL 2352.
- 3) The Program successfully completed its review and revision of the assessment instrument for PHIL 2303.
- 4) The Program successfully completed its review and revision of the assessment instrument for PHIL 1301.
- 5) Program successfully development of an assessment instrument for PHIL 2303 that incorporates metacognitive measures.
- 6) The Program successfully gathered and reported disaggregated data on the relative success of its on-line and in-person sections. These efforts identified areas needing improvement moving forward.

2016-2017 Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary

The Program plans a series of actions aimed at assessing and improving student learning outcomes moving forward. These include:

1) The Program will hold a series of meetings with all faculty to confirm that all faculty are teaching the required elements of all Core Curriculum courses. This is expected to improve performance in both in-person and on-line sections of Core classes.

As part of this discussion, the Program will lay the groundwork for reviewing/revising the assessment instruments for its Core Curriculum classes every four years. Beginning in 2018-2019, the Program will review one of the three Core Class assessment instruments/plans each year. This review will serve as an occasion to reaffirm the required student learning outcomes and tailor the assessment instruments to the Program's priorities. During the 4th year of these cycles, the Program will conduct a general review of its courses and expected student learning outcomes.

3) The Program will begin gathering data on critical thinking and metacognition in all PHIL 2303 sections using the revised assessment instrument.

4) The Program will begin assessing all section of PHIL 1301 using the revised assessment instrument.

5) The Program will review faculty expectations for teaching in its upper-level courses where more than one faculty member teaches the same course. This review will be conducted to ensure that all faculty are aware of the Program's expectations for these courses.

6) The Program will continue to gather and report disaggregated data on in-person and on-line sections of its Core Curriculum courses.

Assessment Plan Summary
Department: Psychology BS

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

Psychology and Philosophy, Department of

Psychology BS

Core Concepts In Psychology

Goal Description

The Bachelor of Science Program in Psychology will provide students with a broad base of essential knowledge in the various subfields of psychology.

Related Items/Elements

 **Students Demonstrate Broad Knowledge Base**

Learning Objective Description

Students who complete the Bachelor of Science Program in Psychology will demonstrate knowledge of core concepts in the various sub-disciplines of Psychology.

 **PSY 1301 Exit Examination**

Indicator Description

Students' knowledge of the diverse areas within the field of psychology will be assessed using a common comprehensive final exam in PSY 1301 - Introduction to Psychology

 1301 Exit Exam

 1301ExitExam

Criterion Description

Criterion for success is to have 70% of the students respond successfully to questions in the following areas: Science of Psychology; Research Design; Physiological; Learning; Sensation/Perception; Developmental; Abnormal; Memory/Cognition; Personality; and Social Psychology. Our operational definition of "successfully" is a minimum of 70% correct on each of the subfields.

A copy of the instrument is attached to this indicator.

Findings Description

In the fall 2016 semester, 657 students took the common Introductory Psychology exit exam. The overall percentage of correct scores was 67%. In the

spring 2017 semester we had a sample of 662 students taking the common final with an overall percentage of correct scores of 64.0. Data from the Exit Exam for Introductory Psychology broken down between semesters showed that the following percentage of correct answers for specific areas in psychology. Note that the scores for fall 2015 and spring 2016 are listed in parentheses. Asterisks (*) signify positive changes in our data while negatives (-) indicate negative changes in the data.

	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Psychology as a science	71% (78)-	67% (70)-
Research Design	73% (73)	65% (67)-
Physiological Psychology	60% (70)-	59% (70)-
Learning	76% (76)	73% (72)*
Sensation/Perception	65% (72)-	64% (65)-
Cognition/Memory	65% (73)-	73% (66)*
Personality	63% (69)-	58% (71)-
Social	62% (65)-	63% (64)-
Developmental	58% (63)-	55% (63)-
Abnormal	62% (69)-	61% (65)-

Psychology 1301 Exit Exam

Action Description

We were not pleased with the results from this cycle's exit exam. Most scores in specific areas decreased and even though the declines perhaps were not statistically significant, they still were declines.

To counteract this, specific actions will include having all of our TAs attend the Teaching Conference in August 2017. In addition, we have continued to review individual questions in each section and, in some cases, change the wording or replace the questions to make them more understandable. This, perhaps, had a slight effect in raising performance and we will continue to do this this upcoming year to see if this strategy can have a lasting impact. Another factor is that the students seemed to do well with the sub-tests during the semester and didn't do as well during the exit exam. Therefore, one of the issues may be of retention of materials over the course of the semester. The TAs will be instructed to review all of the areas on the exit exam during the final week of class and the students will be given a list of terms from which to re-familiarize themselves for the exit exam.

As always, the department chair will meet with the TAs and stress to them the need to present the material in ways that are germane to the students and are linked with experiences that a typical young person

may have encountered, e.g., rather than using "nonsense" syllables in the mnemonic section of memory, using the learning and retention of grocery lists or names of others in the class or even materials from which to be tested.

In addition, the coordinator will:

1. send out very specific guidelines for what their students should take away from the course for both the unit tests and for the exit exam;
2. examine the performances for all areas on each exam during the course of the semester and compare them with the performance on the exit exam;
4. will encourage the instructors to utilize more on-line materials that the students can access.
5. instruct the TAs to periodically review the materials during the during the course of the semester, prior to the exit exam, to foster re-familiarization of the materials for the students.

In addition, it is the goal that the 70% criterion that is striven for on the final exam be in place for all the areas on the area exams. This should allow us to identify problems as the semester goes along.—This seems to have worked but needs to be viewed more consistently.

Generate, Apply And Communicate Scientific Findings

Goal Description

The Bachelor of Science program in Psychology will provide students with opportunities to apply and communicate the scientific findings of their discipline.

Related Items/Elements

 **Generate, Design, Apply And Communicate Scientific Knowledge**

Learning Objective Description

Students who complete the Bachelor of Science Program in Psychology will be able to generate, design and apply the results of scientific investigations and communicate their implications.

PSYC 3101 (Statistics Lab) Assignments

Indicator Description

The ability of students to conduct and understand research as well as apply and communicate results is assessed by means of a series of faculty-developed assignments for Psychology 3101 (Statistics Lab). The instruments requires students to: 1) choose research designs, compute statistics, and interpret outcomes. (Objectives 1 and 2); and interpreting results of scientific data, making decisions using the results based upon statistical probabilities, and making recommendations for follow-up work, either in the scientific or social environment. (Objectives 3 and 4). We're basically asking what do these data

mean and why are they important?
Copies of the Assignments are attached.

Criterion Description

Criterion for Objectives 1 and 2, 80% of psychology majors will receive a score that is deemed "acceptable" score (70% or higher) according to faculty-developed departmental rubric.

Findings Description

In the fall 2016 semester, 84.24% of the students attained the aforementioned acceptable score on Objectives 1 and 2 and 71.20% scored at the 80% and above level. In the spring 2017 semester, 84.34% attained an acceptable score on Objectives 1 and 2 while 69.70% scored at least an 80% on Objectives 1 and 2. Thus, students' performances this past academic year exceeded the previous years and we reached our goal, as described above.

With respect to communicating scientific outcomes: in the fall 2016 semester 71.30% reached the criterion of 70% while in the spring 2017 semester 71.90% reached criterion. 39.13% and 36.56% reached the 80% mark.

Again, our goal was reached with respect to communicating scientific outcomes.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

Broad-based knowledge: **From the previous cycle:** We are very pleased with the performance of students taking the Exit Examination in Psychology 1301. Compared to the previous cycle our students performed at a higher level: in the fall the students performed better on 9 of 10 assessment factors; in the spring semester students performed better on five of 10 assessment factors. In the fall they dropped on one assessment factor and in the spring, two assessment factors. Although we did not meet the 70% criterion on all factors, we are happy that our instruction, based upon the Exit Exam, is progressing nicely.

In the upcoming academic year, the coordinator for the Introductory sections will: 1. send out very specific guidelines for what their students should take away from the course for both the unit tests and for the exit exam; 2. examine the performances for all areas on each exam during the course of the semester and compare them with the performance on the exit exam; 4. the instructors will be encouraged to utilize more on-line materials that the students can access. 5. TAs will be instructed to periodically review the materials during the course of the semester, prior to the exit exam, to foster re-familiarization of the materials for the students. In addition, it is the goal that the 70% criterion that is striven for on the final exam be in place for all the areas on the area exams. This should allow us to identify problems as the semester goes along.—This seems to have worked but needs to be viewed more consistently. *For the 2016/2017 academic year the results are less than impressive. There were decreases in scores in the majority of content areas and students appeared to do worse, overall, on the exit exam. We are not happy with these results and will strive to rectify any lapses that occurred over the past year.*

Generating and Communicating Scientific Knowledge: The chair will meet with the new instructor for the statistics course and lab and impress upon him the need to make the material more understandable to the students. He also will review the current types of embedded questions that are asked and attempt to update those with specific, real-life examples. Specific points will be to consistently, throughout the semester, assess how students generate and communicate scientific knowledge. In the fall 2015 semester 80% of the students attained acceptable scores for Objectives 1 and 2, generating scientific knowledge; in the spring 82% met criterion on each of these objectives. Concerning communication of scientific outcomes, 72% reached criterion and 74% reached criterion in the spring 2016 semester. While we did not meet criterion for Communication of scientific outcomes, we are still very encouraged by our results and by the progress our students are making.

In the upcoming academic year, we are keeping in place the strategies that we adopted this past year and will continue to "tweak" the assessment tools when it is deemed necessary. For both areas: 1. questions will be embedded in each exam, and addressed on each laboratory exercise, to assess the students' abilities to determine and explain statistical findings and effects; 2. the 80% of students successfully mastering the materials criterion will continue to be used--Overall, the criterion was met on one indicator and almost met on the other. What would be better, though, would be to have met criteria for both indicators for each semester and not just over the entire year. 3. if criteria is not met at each level of assessment further remedial tasks will be given--it appears that students did better as the semester progressed, indicating a positive learning curve and that earlier assignments had a positive effect on later assignments. Also, it may be presumed that later assignments reinforced the earlier assignments. 4. assignments including design selection (between vs. within, single factor vs. factorial, etc.) will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% of successful mastery of the materials criterion being used to determine effectiveness--this appears to have worked and we are considering raising our definition of mastery to 75%; 5. assignments with hands-on SPSS/Excel based calculations will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% criterion being used to determine effectiveness--this also seems to have worked; 6. hypothesis formation, testing, and interpretation will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% of students mastering the material being used to determine effectiveness--the laboratory assignments required these factors and we shall continue to use them; 7. students will be tasked on three separate research papers to analyze mock data and report decisions in APA-style results and Discussion sections. An 80% criterion will be used to determine effectiveness of the course to instill the ability to generate and communicate scientific data--we used two APA-formatted papers during the course of the semester and student scored between 74% and 82% on Objectives 1 and 2 and between 69% and 80% on Objectives 3 and 4. Again, they were much better in the spring than in the fall and this may be a result of the instructor being more comfortable with our students. I think we will probably keep him. *The chair, once again was pleased with the results of the Psychology 3101 exit exams as the students appear to be well-grounded in generating and communicating scientific knowledge.*

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

Broad-based knowledge: For the 2016-2017 academic year, we are not at all pleased with the performance of students taking the Exit Examination in Psychology 1301. Compared to the previous cycle our students performed at a lower level, although, it perhaps was not statistically different from the previous academic year. In both the fall and spring semesters, students performed worse on 8 of 10 assessment factors, compared with the previous cycle. Also, we only met criterion on 30% of the factors in the fall and 20% in the spring, data of which we are not proud. In the upcoming academic year, the coordinator for the Introductory sections will: 1. meet with TA and discuss specific guidelines for what their students should take away from the course for both the unit tests and for the exit exam; 2. examine the performances for all areas on each exam during the course of the semester and compare them with the performance on the exit exam; 3. the instructors

will be encouraged to utilize more on-line materials that the students can access. 4. TAs will be instructed to periodically review the materials during the course of the semester, prior to the exit exam, to foster re-familiarization of the materials for the students. In addition, it is the goal that the 70% criterion that is striven for on the final exam be in place for all the areas on the area exams. This should allow us to identify problems as the semester goes along.

Generating and Communicating Scientific Knowledge: The chair will meet with the instructor for the statistics course and lab and impress upon him the need to make the material more understandable to the students. He also will review the current types of embedded questions that are asked and attempt to update those with specific, real-life examples. Specific points will be to consistently, throughout the semester, assess how students generate and communicate scientific knowledge. In the fall 2016 semester 84% of the students attained acceptable scores for Objectives 1 and 2, generating scientific knowledge; in the spring 84% met criterion on each of these objectives. Concerning communication of scientific outcomes, 71% reached criterion and 71% reached criterion in the spring 2017 semester. While we did not meet the 80% criterion on "communicating scientific outcomes," we are encouraged by our results and by the progress our students are making. Thus, we are keeping in place the strategies that we adopted this past year and will continue to "tweak" the assessment tools when it is deemed necessary. For both areas: 1. questions will be embedded in each exam, and addressed on each laboratory exercise, to assess the students' abilities to determine and explain statistical findings and effects; 2. the 80% of students successfully mastering the materials criterion will continue to be used--Overall, the criterion was met on one indicator and almost met on the other. What would be better, though, would be to have met criteria for both indicators for each semester and not just over the entire year. 3. if criterion is not met at each level of assessment further remedial tasks will be given--it appears that students did better as the semester progressed, indicating a positive learning curve and that earlier assignments had a positive effect on later assignments. Also, it may be presumed that later assignments reinforced the earlier assignments. 4. assignments including design selection (between vs. within, single factor vs. factorial, etc.) will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% of successful mastery of the materials criterion being used to determine effectiveness--this appears to have worked and we are considering raising our definition of mastery to 75%; 5. assignments with hands-on SPSS/Excel based calculations will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% criterion being used to determine effectiveness--this also seems to have worked; 6. hypothesis formation, testing, and interpretation will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% of students mastering the material being used to determine effectiveness--the laboratory assignments required these factors and we shall continue to use them; 7. students will be tasked on three separate research papers to analyze mock data and report decisions in APA-style results and Discussion sections. An 80% criterion will be used to determine effectiveness of the course to instill the ability to generate and communicate scientific data--we used two APA-formatted papers during the course of the semester and student scored between 74% and 82% on Objectives 1 and 2 and between 69% and 80% on Objectives 3 and 4. Again, they were much better in the spring than in the fall and this may be a result of the instructor being more comfortable with our students. I think we will probably keep him. The chair, once again was pleased with the results of the Psychology 3101 exit exams. Students did well and appeared to be well-grounded in generating and communicating scientific knowledge.

Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary

Broad-based knowledge:

First, we have changed the text for Psychology 1301 to a book that appears much more readable. This should engage the students more than previous texts in the course.

Specific plans for the academic year include:

1. sending out very specific guidelines for what their students should take away from the course;
2. examine the performances for those areas on each pertinent exam during the course of the semester;
3. instruct the TAs to make the materials for these areas more germane to student interest;
4. encouraged the instructors to utilize more on-line materials that the students can access. Assessments will be ongoing and will consist of comparing performance on each area exam with performance on past and current final exams.

In addition, it is the goal that the 70% criterion that is striven for on the final exam be in place for all the areas on the area exams.

This should allow us to identify problems as the semester goes along.

Generating and Communicating Scientific Knowledge: The chair will continue to meet with the instructor for the statistics course and lab and impress upon him the need to make the material more understandable to the students. He also will review the current types of embedded questions that are asked and attempt to update those with specific, real-life examples.

Specific points will be to consistently, throughout the semester, assess how students generate and communicate scientific knowledge.

For both areas:

1. questions will be embedded in each exam, and addressed on each laboratory exercise, to assess the students' abilities to determine and explain statistical findings and effects;
2. the 80% criterion will continue to be used;
3. if criteria is not met at each level of assessment further remedial tasks will be given;
4. assignments including design selection (between vs. within, single factor vs. factorial, etc.) will be required of the Psychology 3101/3301 class with an 80% criterion being used to determine effectiveness;
5. assignments with hands-on SPSS/Excel based calculations will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% criterion being used to determine effectiveness;

6. hypothesis formation, testing, and interpretation will be required of the Psychology 3101 class with an 80% criterion being used to determine effectiveness;

7. students will be tasked on three separate research papers to analyze mock data and report decisions in APA-style results and Discussion sections. An 80% criterion will be used to determine effectiveness of the course to instill the ability to generate and communicate scientific data.

Assessment Plan Summary
Department: School Psychology SSP

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

Psychology and Philosophy, Department of

School Psychology SSP

Foundational Competence In School Psychology

Goal Description

Students develop competence in the scientific, theoretical and conceptual foundations of professional school psychology.

Related Items/Elements

 **Foundational Competency In School Psychology**

Learning Objective Description

Students demonstrate competency in the scientific, methodological and theoretical foundations of professional school psychology.

 **National School Psychology Exam (PRAXIS II)**

Indicator Description

The PRAXIS II School Psychology Exam is a nationally administered examination used to determine an individual's qualification for licensure to practice within the field. Candidate competency is evaluated with respect to the following four domains:

1. Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery
2. Direct & Indirect Services for Children, Families and Schools
3. Systems Level Services
4. Professional Practices: Practices that Permeate All Aspects of Service and Delivery).

Criterion Description

A minimum score of 147 is required on this examination to obtain the credential of Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). Thus, a score of 147 or better has been established by the SSP Program as the criterion for this objective. In addition, candidates are expected to perform at or above the average range provided by the test developers for each of the four subcategories.

Findings Description

Six SSP candidates took the PRAXIS II exam during the past academic year. Total Test Scores ranged from 151 to 175, with an average score of 167. (Please see Table 4.)

Regarding individual domain score, four of six candidates (67%) demonstrated scores within or above the average performance range for Domain 1 (Professional Practices: Practices that Permeate All Aspects of Service and Delivery). Further, five of six candidates (83%) demonstrated scores within or above the average performance range for Domains 2 (Direct & Indirect Services for Children, Families and Schools), 3 (Systems-Level Services), and 4 (Foundations of School Psychological Service Delivery). Ultimately, however, the Praxis II exam is scored in a Pass/Fail fashion. While we had limited instances of candidates not meeting the average score expectation on an individual domain, all candidates successfully passed the exam.

 Table 4 -- Praxis II Data (2016-2017)

National School Psychology Exam (Praxis II)

Action Description

All members of the cohort scored at or above the acceptable level on the PRAXIS II exam, thereby meeting program expectations for the total score. Further, these scores are at or above expectations for state licensure (TX) and national certification as a School Psychologist. We will continue instructing the next cohort of students in the methods that resulted in our recent success and monitor their progress.

Skill Application

Goal Description

Students develop competence in skill application of professional school psychology in a public school setting.

Related Items/Elements

Skill Application

Learning Objective Description

Candidates in the school psychology program demonstrate knowledge and improving skill application commensurate with their level of training. Specifically, candidates in their final practicum placement and on internship, both held within the public school setting, will demonstrate appropriate application of professional school psychology skills in the areas of assessment, behavioral consultation, academic intervention and counseling.

Indicator Description

Indicator Rating Forms and Positive Impact Data Ratings Forms (1) Satisfactory ratings from Field Supervisors 1(A) Ratings for Practicum II candidates (Year 2 of 3) 1(B) Ratings for candidates on Internship (Year 3 of 3) On-site, or field, supervisors are asked to evaluate each candidate's performance in order to gauge their professional performance according to the NASP Standards for the Domains of Competence. These Standards include: II) Data-Based Decision-Making and Accountability, III) Consultation and Collaboration, IV) Direct and Indirect Services at the Student Level {includes 4.1: Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills and 4.2: Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills}, V) Direct and Indirect Services at the Systems Level {includes 5.1: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning and 5.2: Preventive and Responsive Services}, VI) Direct and Indirect Services to support Family-School Collaboration, VII) Foundations of School Psychologists' Service Delivery: Diversity, and VIII) Foundations of School Psychologists' Service Delivery: Research, Program Evaluation, Legal, Ethical and Professional Practice {includes 8.1: Research and Program Evaluation and 8.2: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice}.

(2) Satisfactory ratings from Program Faculty 2(A) Faculty Rating Forms (FRF) for both of two Portfolio cases submitted 2(B) Procedural Integrity Rubrics (PIR) for both of two Portfolio cases submitted Candidates completing the Internship Portfolio assessment will obtain satisfactory ratings from the Program Faculty on each of two cases submitted. All candidates are required to submit an Academic Assessment and Intervention case. The candidates are permitted to choose between a Behavioral Consultation and Intervention case and a Counseling case for their second submission. As much as if feasible, two faculty members will evaluate each case, and the average of these two ratings on both the FRF and the PIR will be reported.

Indicator Positive Impact Data (3) Quantitative data gathered as part of the case intervention 3(A) Effect Size AND/OR 3(B) Percent of Non-Overlapping Data Points (PND) Candidates completing the Internship Portfolio assessment will submit quantitative data gathered as part of the case intervention monitoring for the two cases submitted. Effect size and/or percent of non-overlapping data points (PND) are to be calculated. For academic cases, the slope (R2) may also be reported. In such cases, a moderate effect of at least 0.09 is expected.

Criterion Description

Criterion Skill Application 1A: Candidates are rated by field supervisors according to a five-point scale including the following competency rating categories: Major Area of Concern (Additional, Intensive Supervision Required) {1}, Improvement Needed (Additional Supervision Required) {2}, Meets Expectations for Training Level (Supervision Needed) {3}, Exceeds Expectations for Training Level (Supervision Needed) {4}, Professionally Competent (No Supervision Needed) {5}. Because candidates in their final practicum will be under supervision for two more years, they are expected to maintain an overall average rating of "3.0" for all of the NASP Domains evaluated. 1B: Candidates are rated by field supervisors according to a five-point scale including the following competency rating categories: Major Area of Concern (Additional, Intensive Supervision Required) {1}, Improvement Needed (Additional Supervision Required) {2}, Meets Expectations for Training Level (Supervision Needed) {3}, Exceeds Expectations for Training Level (Supervision

Needed) {4}, Professionally Competent (No Supervision Needed) {5}. Because candidates completing their internship year will continue to be under supervision for one more year, they are expected to maintain an overall average rating of “3.0” for all of the NASP Domains evaluated. 2A: Candidates completing their internship experience are required to submit two distinct Portfolio cases. Each case will be reviewed, as much as is feasible, by two faculty members and assigned ratings on the Faculty Rating Form (FRF). These ratings will then be averaged across the two faculty raters. The FRF addresses all domains of practice related to the type of case being reviewed. Each item on the FRF includes the following competency rating categories: Pass (score 1), No Pass (score 0), Not Included (score 0), and Not Applicable (removed from the scoring calculation). Candidates are expected to achieve a minimum domain competency average of 85%. In addition, candidates are given a single faculty rating for the overall case completion. This rating ranges from 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Very Good). Candidates are expected to achieve a minimum average overall rating of 3 across the two faculty raters, which is equivalent to “average” work completed in the field. 2B: Internship portfolio case submissions are also scored by faculty using a Procedural Integrity Rubric, or PIR. Each case PIR includes critical procedures that must be performed as part of completing the case in order for the intern to be judged as following best practices within the field. Each item on the PIR can be scored as follows: 0 = Incomplete, 1 = Needs Improvement (task is completed, with some concerns), 2 = Completed Satisfactorily (Competency Met), and 3 = Exemplary Performance (task is completed at a level above expectations). Each PIR for the cases submitted has an established cut score equivalent to achievement of at least 85%. Additionally, candidates are expected to obtain no ratings of “0” on any PIR. 3A: Based on the quantitative data included as part of the Behavioral Consultation and Intervention, Counseling, and/or Academic Assessment and Intervention Portfolio case submissions, the candidate’s impact on student behavior and/or learning can be calculated in a variety of ways. Effect size allows for the comparison of the standard mean difference in student performance during baseline and treatment phases of intervention. An effect size of .8 is considered to be of moderate impact. For academic cases, the slope (R2) may also be reported. In such cases, a moderate effect of at least 0.09 is expected. Candidates are expected to demonstrate moderate impact through either effect size or PND calculation for both of the cases submitted. 3B: Based on the quantitative data included as part of the Portfolio case submissions, the candidate’s impact on student behavior and/or learning can be calculated in a variety of ways. Percent of Non-overlapping Data points, or PND, provides a comparison of the percentage of data points during the treatment phase that do not overlap with the most extreme baseline phase point. A PND calculation of 60% is considered to be of moderate impact. Candidates are expected to demonstrate moderate impact through either effect size or PND calculation for both of the cases submitted.

Findings Description

Practicum Field Supervisor Ratings

There were six candidates who participated in the final Practicum experience during the Spring 2017 semester. Field supervisors rated our candidates, as a whole, very well and solidly within the “Competent” range. All seven Practicum students (100%) achieved an average supervisor rating equal to or above the target score of 3.0 (Range = 3.00 – 3.27; Mean = 3.13). Finally, the cohort average rating within each of the ten Standard areas measured exceeded the

Internship Field Supervisor Ratings

Six candidates participated in the Internship experience during the 2016-2017 academic year. Field supervisors rated our candidates, as a whole, very well and solidly within the “Competent” range. Five candidates (i.e., Candidates 1 through 5) achieved an average supervisor rating above the target score of 3.0 (Range = 3.6 – 4.76; Mean = 4.10). Additionally, for Candidates 1 through 5, the average rating within each of the ten Standard areas measured exceeded the criterion score of 3.0 (Range = 3.82 – 4.35; Mean = 4.10). (See Table 1B.) At the time of this report, a Field Supervisor Rating was not available for Candidate 6. Near the conclusion of the semester, the Field Supervisor for Candidate 6 took an emergency leave from her position. The Internship Coordinator attempted (unsuccessfully) to obtain ratings from the supervisor as well as the lead supervisor for the district. Furthermore, the Program Director attempted (unsuccessfully) to obtain ratings from the Candidate and the lead supervisor.

FRF Portfolio Reviews

Six candidates completed their Internship Portfolios this academic year. Two Portfolio cases submitted were rated by two faculty members to obtain an average Faculty Rating Form (FRF) rating and an average overall case rating. For the Academic Intervention case, all six candidates (100%) achieved the criterion of 85% or higher on the average FRF rating as well as the overall rating of ‘3’ or higher for the case. For the Behavioral Consultation/Intervention case and/or the Counseling case, all six candidates (100%) achieved the criterion of 85% or higher on the average FRF rating as well as the overall rating of ‘3’ or higher for the case. (See Tables 2A and 2C.)

PIR Portfolio Reviews

Two Portfolio cases submitted were evaluated by two faculty raters using the Procedural Integrity Rubric (PIR) in order to obtain an average PIR score. Additionally, candidates were expected to obtain no ratings of ‘0’ on each of the PIR documents. For the Academic Intervention case, all six candidates (100%) achieved an average PIR score at or above the cut score of 24, with two of the six candidates (33%) receiving scores of ‘0’ on these case ratings. For the Behavioral Consultation/Intervention and/or Counseling cases, all six candidates (100%) achieved an average PIR score at or above the cut score of 21, with none of the six candidates (0%) receiving scores of ‘0’ on these case ratings. (See Tables 2B and 2D.)

Positive Impact Data for Quantitative Intervention Cases

Candidates' impact on student learning during the Internship experience is evaluated quantitatively through intervention cases submitted as part of the Portfolio assessment. All submitted cases are expected to involve intervention with students that is conducive to collecting progress monitoring data. A candidate's positive impact on student functioning is evaluated by calculating either an effect size (e.g., Cohen's d), R^2 , or percentage of non-overlapping data points (PND). All six internship candidates (100%) achieved at least a moderate impact (see definition above) on student learning for the Academic Intervention Case. Regarding the positive impact data for the Behavioral or Counseling Intervention case, 5 of 6 students (83%) reported at least a moderate impact (as defined above). The remaining candidate reported a small to moderate positive impact in his/her report. However, it should be noted that all six (100%) candidates either met or exceeded the expectation of a moderate impact for one of the two cases submitted. (See Tables 3A and 3B.)

 2016 - 2017 SACS Data Tables (School Psychology)

Rating Forms and Positive Impact Data

Action Description

All seven students who completed the Internship experience were rated as competent by their field supervisors. In the coming years, the faculty will continue working closely with field supervisors throughout the internship experience to ensure continued excellence in training and performance.

All six practicum students were rated as meeting expectations for their level of training. As with our ongoing consultation and collaboration with Internship supervisors, the faculty will continue working closely with Practicum supervisors to ensure continued excellence in training.

Regarding Portfolio case reviews, the candidates were generally rated quite highly by program faculty. However, as was previously noted, two candidates earned a single 'zero' rating on their Behavioral Consultation Procedural Integrity Rubric (PIR) by one faculty member. While these two candidates each earned a single score of '0' on the PIR, they also earned a perfect (i.e., 33/33 points) or near perfect score (i.e., 32/33) on the PIR. With the introduction of two new school psychology faculty members in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, increased clarity in program expectations for student performance is of paramount importance. The school psychology faculty will meet in the Fall of 2017 for a review and didactic training on the portfolio evaluation tools (i.e., the PIR and the Faculty Rating Form). Special attention will be given to program expectations for explicit inclusion of elements in portfolio reports and to increasing interrater reliability among the reviewers.

Finally, six Interns submitted two cases in their portfolios. We are

encouraged by the positive impact indicated for each of these cases, as well as the explicit reporting of positive impact data. Each of the Interns reported the required positive impact data on their Academic Intervention and their Behavior or Counseling Intervention Report. This is a clear improvement from the 2015-2016 cycle, in which only 5 of 6 interns reported positive impact data on the Behavior or Counseling Intervention Report. The University Supervisor for Internship and the school psychology faculty will continue working closely with students throughout their internship year to ensure that outcome assessment methodology is consistent with SSP program expectations.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

1. The department has hired two additional core school psychology faculty members who will begin in the Fall (2016). One major goal is to quickly integrate our new faculty members into the local community and schools. To this end, each of the new faculty members has been assigned to teach a Practicum course. This will require the new faculty members to supervise field-based cases in local districts, which will increase their opportunities to work with school administrators as well as local school psychologists who supervise our students in later practica. For support purposes, each of the new faculty members has been assigned a mentor/supervisor from the school psychology program faculty who will guide them in their efforts as new supervisors.
2. While we noted significant improvement in the Interns' reporting of positive impact data, we would like to continue our efforts to train students and encourage site-based supervisors to report these data. To this end, we are conducting a Supervisor's Workshop in August (2016) which will include a unit on outcomes measurement and reporting of positive impact data (within the SHSU SSP Program Framework). The Interns and their individual Site Supervisors are asked to attend this workshop, as well as other supervisors who provide supervision for our students in the Practicum II course.
3. Finally, we would like to continue to grow our base of local Practicum and Internship sites as well as site supervisors. While we currently have a variety and sufficient number of field-based placements for our students, we would like to prepare for program growth by establishing new opportunities.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

1. One of the two newly hired faculty members began teaching school psychology courses in the Fall of 2016. This faculty member taught a Practicum course focused on counseling interventions, and supervised cases in three local school districts. In addition to the supervision of our students, this faculty member worked closely with administrators at each of these districts to identify at-risk students or those otherwise in need of services. Further, this faculty member began work to establish relationships with local organizations (e.g., the YMCA) for the purposes of research partnerships and educational workshops. This faculty member's assigned mentor assisted her/him in establishing momentum with a research program and pursuing licensure as a psychologist in the

state of Texas.

Unfortunately, due to not completing his/her doctoral dissertation prior to his/her hire date, the second newly hired faculty member was unable to begin teaching graduate-level courses in the Fall of 2016. Instead, this faculty member taught undergraduate courses in the department and focused efforts on completion of his/her doctoral dissertation.

2. A workshop was conducted in August 2016 with great success. Both practicum and internship supervisors from area schools attended, and special attention was given to measurement of outcomes and reporting positive impact data. As was noted in our assessment results, all of the Interns reported at least one measure of positive impact for each of their portfolio cases.

3. While we did not establish any new practicum sites for our students during the 2016-2017 year, we maintained positive and productive relationships with each of our current practicum sites. Regarding internship sites, we are pleased to have established relationships with new school districts for four of the seven outgoing interns. Three of these districts are in the greater Houston area, while one district is located in Washington state.

Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary

1. As was noted in the Update to the 2015-2016 Plan for Continuous Improvement, one of our two newly hired faculty members was unable to teach for the school psychology program during the 2016-2017 school year. Therefore, for the Fall of 2017, one goal is to quickly integrate this faculty member into the local community and schools. To this end, this faculty member has been assigned to teach an Advanced School Psychology course, which includes a field-based component. This will require the faculty member to work with school psychologists, teachers, and administrators in local districts, thereby establishing new contacts for the faculty member and foundational opportunities for the development of our students' knowledge of the field. For support purposes, the faculty member has also been assigned a mentor/supervisor from the school psychology program faculty who will guidance in establishing momentum for a research program and teaching graduate-level courses.

2. We noted significant improvement in the Interns' reporting of positive impact data, with all of the interns providing positive impact data for each of their portfolio cases. For the Behavior Consultation case, each of the interns provided a Cohen's d value. However, it was noted that only half of the interns also provided data for Non-Overlapping Data points (NDP). While providing two measures of positive impact for an individual case is not currently required, multiple outcome measures can provide a more comprehensive picture of impact. Therefore, the instructor of the Behavior Consultation Course (PSYC 5338) and the Internship Coordinator (PSYC 6371) will encourage/prompt students to provide multiple outcomes for individual cases where applicable.

3. Finally, we would like to increase the number of applicants from local universities that do not house specialist-level school psychology programs (e.g., Prairie View A&M, Texas A&M, Lamar University). In the Fall of 2017, SSP program faculty will meet to establish a list of area schools for recruitment, establish contacts at those schools within the colleges of education and departments of psychology, and to develop a presentation on the field of school psychology and the benefits of training in the SSP Program at Sam Houston State University. We would like to meet with junior and senior level students and Psi Chi organizations for at least two Universities during the Fall of 2017.

Department of Sociology

Assessment Plan Summary
Department: Sociology BA/BS

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

Sociology, Department of

Sociology BA/BS

1. Achieve Sociological Competency: Entry Level

Goal Description

Students who take introductory sociology classes will gain basic knowledge of social life, social change, and the causes and consequences of human behavior as they acquire the sociological perspective.

Related Items/Elements

 **Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Entry Level**

Learning Objective Description

Students who take introductory sociology classes that are included in the SHSU Core Curriculum will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the basic core concepts of the discipline and the sociological perspective.

 **Comprehension Of Basic Core Concepts: Entry Level**

Indicator Description

A sample of students enrolled in all of the three introduction-level sociology courses in the SHSU Core Curriculum (SOCI2319 in Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts; and, SOCI1301 and SOCI1306 in Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences) is chosen in the Spring semester for evaluation. Employing an extra credit opportunity format, students responded to a five question evaluation instrument for the Component Area V courses (see Attachment #1) and the Component Area IV course, respectively (see Attachment #2) to measure their understanding of basic core concepts in Sociology. The selection of these indicators conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological research. This assessment was developed by the Department Undergraduate Committee.

In this cycle, we included item-by-item analyses to assess students' understanding of the sub-concepts of basic core concepts of the discipline indicated by the SHSU Core Curriculum.

Two sub-concept areas corresponding to the Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts: (a) Concept 1- To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social

context (questions 1, 2, and 4); and (b) Concept 2 - to demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences (questions 3 and 5).

Five sub-concept areas corresponding to the Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences: (a) Concept 1- to employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition (Q2); (b) Concept 2 - to examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures (Q4); (c) Concept 3 - to use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories (Q1); (d) Concept 4 - to develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues (Q3); and (e) Concept 5 - to identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures (Q5).

Criterion Description

Overall, at least 85% of participating students should have at least 3 correct answers out of the 5 questions for Component Area V and Component Area IV, respectively.

For the Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts, at least 85% of participating students should have at least 2 correct answers out of the 3 questions for the Concept 1, and at least 1 correct answer out of the 2 questions for the Concept 1.

For the Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences, at least 85% of participating students should have correct answers for each concept.

 Attach1BA.BSEntry16.17

 Attach2BA.BSEntry16.17

Findings Description

1. Overall, of the 1409 enrolled students in 37 sections (10 sessions of SOCI 1301, 4 sessions of SOCI1306, and 23 sessions of SOCI 2319), 975 students participated in the assessment (69.2% participation rate).
2. Overall, 94% and 92.1% of participating students had at least 3 correct answers out of the 5 questions for Component Area IV and Component Area V, respectively. Therefore, over 90% of the participating students performed satisfactorily (see Attachment 3: Analysis of Findings).
3. For the Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts, 91% of participating students had at least 2 correct answers out of the 3 questions for the Concept 1, and 97% of participating students had at least 1 correct answer out of the 2 questions for the Concept 2.
4. For the Component Area V: Social and Behavioral Sciences, 71.5%, 78%, 85.6%, 76.1%, and 83.9% of participating students had correct answers for each concept. Except for Concept 3, less than 85% of participating students had correct answers for each of the five concepts.

 Attach3BA.BSEntry16.17

Comprehend Basic Core Concepts

Action Description

The data indicate the desired overall result is exceeded regarding both component areas. The item-by-item analysis of the data also indicates that the desired result is exceeded regarding both concepts in Component Area IV: Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts. However, the item-by-item analysis of the data indicates that the desired result was not met for four of the five concepts for Component Area V: Social and Behavior Sciences. The department will continue to ensure that entry level students have an overall understand of the basic core concepts of sociology. Furthermore, the Undergraduate Committee will meet and discuss how to improve student performance on the four concepts of Component Area V that were not met the desired result.

2. Sociological Competency: Mid-level

Goal Description

Students who complete the mid-level assessment course, SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology, will gain knowledge and skills in thinking and writing sociologically.

Related Items/Elements

Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Mid-level

Learning Objective Description

Sociology majors will be able to demonstrate the ability to think and write sociologically.

Sociological Mid-level Papers

Indicator Description

The SOCI 2399: Writing in Sociology is required as a mid-level course to achieve the BA/BS in Sociology. A sociological essay is a requirement of the class. A random sample of thirty-three percent of student essays (7 of 21) were selected from the SOCI2399: Writing in Sociology class in the Spring 2017 semester for assessment of their ability to think and write sociologically.

Members of the Undergraduate Committee reviews the selected papers at the end of the Spring semester based on two main areas: sociological content and sociological writing in the discipline of Sociology. Sociological content includes three criteria: understanding social forces, applying a theoretical framework, and providing empirical evidence. Sociological writing includes three criteria: adopting American Sociological Association format, demonstrating a formal academic writing style, and minimizing grammatical errors. The selection of these criteria conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological thinking and writing. The evaluation rubric was developed and reviewed by the Undergraduate Committee (see Attachment #1).

Each paper was evaluated by three Undergraduate Committee members (two

faculty members and the Director) using the evaluation rubric, where a score from 1 to 5 (1 is “no mastery” and 5 is “excellent mastery”) is assigned in each of the six criteria in the two main areas. Note: The Undergraduate Committee is composed of four faculty members plus the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

 Attach1BA.BSMidLevelRubric16.17

Criterion Description

At least 75% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average overall and for each of the two main areas: Content and Writing Style.

Findings Description

Six of the seven (85.7%) students' essays meet the minimum requirements overall and for the Sociological Content and Sociological Writing areas, respectively. Attachment #2 includes each of the individual committee members' ratings for each of the seven papers, and a summary results table. Attachment #3 includes each of the individual committee members' ratings for each of the seven papers, and summary results for the Sociological Content and Sociological Writing areas. The results of the analysis in each area reveal that students performed slightly better on the Content area (3.87/5.0) than the Writing area (3.76/5.0).

 Attach2.BABS.Mid16.17

 Attach3.BABS.Mid16.17

Demonstrating Sociology Writing

Action Description

The data indicate the desired result is exceeded overall and for both of the component areas. The department will continue to ensure that mid-level sociology majors demonstrate the ability to think and write sociologically.

3. Sociological Competency: Exit Level

Goal Description

Students who complete the Sociology Program will have an advanced understanding of the core concepts of the discipline and the sociological perspective.

Related Items/Elements

 **Demonstrate Sociological Competency: Exit Level**

Learning Objective Description

Sociology majors will be able to demonstrate and apply advanced sociological knowledge and scientific skills to critically analyze social phenomenon through a capstone research paper.

 Sociological Papers: Exit Level**Indicator Description**

The SOCI4399: Senior Seminar class is a required capstone course to achieve the BA/BS in Sociology. A sociological research paper is a requirement of the class. A random sample of thirty-one percent of student research papers (12 out of 39) was selected from the SOCI4399: Senior Seminar classes in the Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 semesters for assessment of their advanced sociological knowledge and scientific skills to critically analyze social phenomenon.

The Undergraduate Committee reviews the selected papers at the end of the Spring semester based on three core criteria in the discipline of Sociology: sociological theory; sociological methods; and sociological perspective. The selection of these criteria conforms to disciplinary standards for sociological research. The evaluation rubric was developed by the Undergraduate Committee and approved by the entire faculty (see Attachment #1).

Each paper is evaluated by three undergraduate committee members (two faculty members and the Director) using the evaluation rubric, where a score from 1 to 5 (1 is “no mastery” and 5 is “excellent mastery”) is assigned in each of the three core areas. Note: The Undergraduate Committee is composed of four faculty members plus the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

To continue to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in meeting the core learning objectives in the undergraduate BA and BS programs, for the 2016-2017 cycle we conducted item-by-item analysis in the three core areas: sociological theory; sociological methods; and sociological perspective.

 Attach1BA.BSExitRubric.16.17**Criterion Description**

Overall, at least 75% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for the three core areas.

For item by item analysis, at least 75% of papers should be rated 3 or better on average for each of the three core areas.

Findings Description

Overall, 10 of the 12 students' papers (83.3%) meet the minimum requirement in all three core areas. Regarding the item-by-item analysis of the three core areas, 12 out of 12 (100.00%) for theory, 10 out of 12 (83.3%) for methods, and 12 out of 12 (100%) for sociological perspective, meet the minimum requirement. Attachment #2 includes each of the individual committee members' ratings for each of the twelve papers, summary tables of overall results and item-by-item analysis.

 Attach2BABS.Exit16.17 **Apply Sociological Perspective, Theory, and Methods****Action Description**

Overall, the data indicate that the desired result is exceeded for all three competency areas. The result of the item-by-item analysis reveals that while all students exceeded the minimum criteria for the theory (12 of 12) and sociological perspective (12 of 12) areas, one-sixth (2 of 12) of students did not meet the minimum requirement regarding the research methods criteria. The department will continue to make efforts in curricula and teaching to maintain high performance in all three competency areas.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement**Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify)**

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator will meet with SHSU Online to try to overcome the technical difficulties regarding Blackboard's capacity to effectively retrieve and report the necessary data for item-by-item analysis. This will allow the Department to identify strengths and weaknesses item-by-item, as well as identify potential differences in online and in-person delivery systems related to core concept comprehension. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (85%) for the percentage of students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome for the 2016-2017 assessment period.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee and Department Assessment Coordinator will work with the professors who teach this course to adjust the evaluation rubric to allow for enhanced analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the two main component areas, Content and Writing Style, with three criteria in each area. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall and in each main item criteria in the 2016-2017 cycle.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, based on the results reported in the item-by-item analysis, the department will work with the professors to rectify the deficiency of student learning outcomes in the core area of research methods. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall and in each of the three core areas in the 2016-2017 cycle.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator worked closely with SHSU Online to overcome the technical difficulties regarding Blackboard's capacity to effectively retrieve and report the necessary data for item-by-item analysis. The effort was complicated but successful overall, except for two classes that were excluded from the analysis due to coding inconsistencies. The item-by-item analysis revealed that the entry-level students understand well the basic concepts related to Component Area IV, but do not understand well the basic concepts related to Component Area V. The Department was not successful at evaluating student comprehension between online and in-person delivery methods during this cycle.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator worked with the professors who teach this course to adjust the evaluation rubric to allow for enhanced analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the two main component areas, Content and Writing Style, with three criteria in each area. The effort was successful as all selected student papers exceeded the minimum requirement.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator worked with the professors to rectify the deficiency of student learning outcomes in the core area of research methods. The effort was successful as the students' performance exceeded the minimum requirement.

Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary

Regarding the entry-level assessment, the Department Assessment Coordinator will continue to meet with SHSU Online and the instructors to ensure that all sections of the entry-level courses provide clean data for analysis. The Undergraduate Committee will meet with the instructors who teach these courses to improve the teaching and student comprehension regarding the four deficient conceptual areas in Component Area IV: Social and Behavior Sciences. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (85%) for the percentage of students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome for the 2017-2018 assessment period.

Regarding the mid-level assessment, the Undergraduate Committee and Department Assessment Coordinator will continue to perform the analysis of the two main component areas (Content and Writing Style) to identify strengths and weaknesses. In addition, item-by-item analysis of the three criteria in each component area will be carried out to identify specific strengths and weaknesses with the main areas. The Department will maintain the existing criterion (75%) for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall, in each component area, and in the three items per component area in the 2017-2018 cycle.

Regarding the exit-level assessment, although student performance in all three student learning outcome areas is above the minimum requirement, the Undergraduate Committee and Department Assessment Coordinator will continue to work with the professors who teach this course to maintain the high levels of learning outcomes in theory and sociological thinking and improve the student learning outcomes in the core area of research methods. Based on improved exit-level performance, the Department will raise the existing criterion of 75% to 80% for students meeting the minimum requirement for the desired learning outcome overall and in each of the three core areas in the 2017-2018 cycle.

**Department of
World Languages and
Cultures**

Assessment Plan Summary
Department: Spanish BA

Sam Houston State University

President, Office of

Academic Affairs, Division of

Humanities and Social Sciences, College of

World Languages and Cultures, Department of

Spanish BA

Language Proficiency

Goal Description

The BA in Spanish at SHSU targets two student populations: 1) those seeking teacher certification (TC) for teaching Spanish at the secondary level in the Texas public school system and 2) those wishing to complete the BA without teacher certification (WTC). The language proficiency requirements are essentially the same for both the TC and WTC groups; however, TC students must complete additional requirements in the Faculty of Education and also pass a state certification exam. The goal of WOLC is to graduate TC and WTC students with a high level of oral and written proficiency in Spanish.

Related Items/Elements

 **Oral Proficiency**

Learning Objective Description

Before graduating, all students (TC and WTC) will demonstrate an advanced level of oral proficiency in the target language system.

  **Performance On American Council Of Teachers Of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)**

Indicator Description

Prior to graduation, all students will take the computerized version of the OPI, administered by the SHSU Testing Center.

Criterion Description

All students taking the OPI will obtain a minimum score of “advanced-low” on the proficiency rubric. Students will also be required to take an advisory OPI prior to enrolling in advanced Spanish courses in order to pinpoint areas of oral proficiency that can be improved through advanced-level course work.

Findings Description

The department did not have a necessary budget to cover the cost of administering the OPI computerized version (\$1200). Consequently, WOLC is currently working to see how this cost can be offset by the college and/or students in 2017-2018.



Action Description

It was decided that until funding could be obtained for the OPIc, two faculty would carry-out a face-to-face OPI with majors.



Written Proficiency

Learning Objective Description

Before graduating, all students (TC and WTC) will demonstrate an advanced level of written proficiency (e.g. coherence, grammatical and lexical accuracy, and mechanics) in the target language system



Performance On An Instrument Of Written Language Proficiency

Indicator Description

The Department of Foreign Languages is currently reviewing options for an instrument to use in pursuit of this objective.

Criterion Description

As with the OPI applied to student oral proficiency, all students assessed for written proficiency will display the equivalent of at least "advanced-low" on the written proficiency rubric.

Findings Description

All TC students (4) received the equivalent of "advanced-low" on WOLC written evaluation. The same evaluation procedure will be applied to all non-teaching major in 2017-2018.



Written Language Proficiency

Action Description

Given the success of the instrument, the same WOLC written evaluation will be used for 2017-2018.

Language Proficiency: Minors

Goal Description

WOLC currently offers minors in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, German, French and Spanish. As such WOLC will produce minors who demonstrate an intermediate level of oral proficiency in the target language.

Related Items/Elements



Oral Proficiency: Minors

Learning Objective Description

Upon completion of a language minor (Arabic, French German or Spanish), students will

Minors: Oral Proficiency - American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency (OPI)

Indicator Description

Upon completing the minor students will take either the computerized version of OPI or complete the OPI face-to-face with a faculty member.

Criterion Description

Students will obtain an overall ranking of intermediate high for oral proficiency on the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency (OPI)

Findings Description

An overall ranking of intermediate high for oral proficiency on the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency (OPI) was not possible, as faculty are still seeking ACTFL certification. Training in this area should be completed by May 2018 at which time minors can be assessed with this national standard.

OPI - Minors

Action Description

Given the budget constraints and the cost of training faculty, it was decided to replace the OPIc with OPI face-to-face evaluation carried out by the faculty.

Teacher Certification Preparation

Goal Description

The goal of teacher certification will be to equip teachers with the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to successfully teach Spanish in the secondary classroom.

Related Items/Elements

Integration Of Standards Into Curriculum And Instruction

Learning Objective Description

- 1) TC students will demonstrate an understanding of the goal areas and standards of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning* and their state standards, and integrate these frameworks into curricular planning.
- 2) TC students will integrate the Standards for Foreign Language Learning and their state standards into language instruction.
- 3) TC students will use standards and curricular goals to evaluate, select, design, and adapt instructional resources.

Performance On State And Professional Proficiency Exams With Reference To Curriculum Competencies

Indicator Description

Students preparing for a career teaching Spanish will be assessed by their performance on the representative state certification exam (*TEXES Languages Other than English* (LOTE)) and by performance on the ACTFL Focus Content Observer (FOC) for Spanish teachers.

Criterion Description

Prior to graduation, all TC students will take the LOTE and will obtain a score of 80% or higher for *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment*. TC students' actual classroom teaching will also be evaluated, and their overall teaching performance will minimally demonstrate ACTFL's "world readiness standard for language learning", as referenced by the FOC rubric.

Findings Description

All TC graduates (4) scored 80% or higher for *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment*, and their overall teaching performance minimally demonstrated ACTFL's "world readiness standard for language learning", as referenced by the FOC rubric.

Curriculum Competencies

Action Description

Given the level of current success, WOLC will keep the current training regimen for the LOTE in order to ensure scores on the test of 80% or higher.

Language Acquisition Theories And Instructional Practices

Learning Objective Description

- 1) TC students will be able to demonstrate a good understanding of language acquisition at various developmental levels and use this knowledge to create a supportive classroom learning environment that includes target language input and opportunities for negotiation of meaning and meaningful interaction.
- 2) TC students will develop a variety of instructional practices that reflect language outcomes and articulated program models and address the needs of diverse language learners.

Performance On State And Professional Proficiency Exams With Reference To Language Acquisition Competencies

Indicator Description

Students preparing for a career teaching Spanish will be assessed by their performance on the representative state certification exam (*TEXES Languages Other than English* (LOTE)) and by performance on the ACTFL Focus Content Observer (FOC) for Spanish teachers.

Criterion Description

Prior to graduation, all TC students will take the LOTE and will obtain a score of 80% or higher for *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment*. TC students' actual classroom teaching will also be evaluated, and their overall teaching performance will minimally demonstrate ACTFL's "world readiness standard for language learning", as referenced by the FOC rubric.

Findings Description

Four TC graduating students took the LOTE and obtained a score of 80% or higher for *Domain 1: Instruction and Assessment*. TC students' actual classroom teaching was also evaluated, and their overall teaching performance minimally demonstrated ACTFL's "world readiness standard for language learning", as referenced by the FOC rubric.

 CLA Competencies**Action Description**

Given the level of current success, WOLC will keep the current training regimen for the LOTE in order to ensure scores on the test of 80% or higher.

 Teacher Candidate Professionalism**Learning Objective Description**

- 1) TC students will engage in professional development opportunities that strengthen their own linguistic and cultural competence and promote reflection on practice.
- 2) TC students will know the value of foreign language learning to the overall success of all students and understand that they will need to become advocates with students, colleagues, and members of the community to promote the field.

 Teacher Candidate Oral Presentation (CAPSTONE) Rubric**Indicator Description**

Prior to graduation, all TC students will perform an oral presentation before a panel of SPAN faculty.

Criterion Description

At least 80% of business supervisors of interior design interns will give the intern a rating of 3.5 or higher on a 5.0 scale and 80% of business supervisors will indicate that they would hire the intern given the availability of a suitable entry-level interior design position in the company.

Findings Description

Two students performed a professional presentation in Spanish consisting of teaching elements and specific language items. Both students obtained a successful presentation assessment as per WOLC's Capstone Rubric.

 Capstone Performance
Action Description

As result of the CAPSTONE performances, WOLC will continue to use the same procedures for the CAPSTONE presentation.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement**Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify)**

WOLC has for the first time set tangible departmental goals for the BA in Spanish, and language minors in 2016-2017:

1. Assess samples of 1000 and 2000 level Spanish courses in oral production in order to set ACTFL benchmarks.
2. Compare learning outcomes (French, German and Spanish) between study abroad and domestic learning (face-to-face and online).
3. Increase first-time pass rate on LOTE for Spanish teaching minors.
4. Adopt a new Spanish textbook / curriculum to cover all four levels of Spanish (1411, 1412, 2311, 2312).

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI

Below is the progress update for items 1-4 stated in above PCI.

1. Assess samples of 1000 and 2000 level Spanish courses in oral production in order to set ACTFL benchmarks.

As WOLC did not have the necessary faculty to carry out the assessment of lower-level courses, it has hired a new Coordinator, and this faculty will be assessing samples of 1000 and 2000 levels courses during the 2017 - 2018 academic year.

2. Compare learning outcomes (French, German and Spanish) between study abroad and domestic learning (face-to-face and online).

WOLC has completed assessment of summer study abroad programs in French, Spanish and German, and begun comparisons of group data. The online and face-to-face data will be collected in Fall 2018, and learning outcomes for all three delivery methods will be completed by the end of Spring 2018.

3. Increase first-time pass rate on LOTE for Spanish teaching minors.

WOLC did not have sufficient numbers of Spanish teaching minors taking the LOTE in 2016-2017,

so it was not possible to assess first-time pass rates. However, this rate will be assessed again during the 2017-2018 academic year.

4. Adopt a new Spanish textbook / curriculum to cover all four levels of Spanish (1411, 1412, 2311, 2312).

WOLC adopted a new core textbook (Puntos de Partida) for 1411-2313 face-to-face and online courses. The text has been fully implemented into all levels for Fall 2017.

2015-16 Plan for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary

WOLC has for the first time set tangible departmental goals for the BA in Spanish, and language minors in 2016-2017:

Assess samples of 1000 and 2000 level Spanish courses in oral production in order to set ACTFL benchmarks.

Compare learning outcomes (French, German and Spanish) between study abroad and domestic learning (face-to-face and online).

Increase first-time pass rate on LOTE for Spanish teaching minors.

Adopt a new Spanish textbook / curriculum to cover all four levels of Spanish (1411, 1412, 2311, 2312).