

# Meta-assessment Analysis Report

College of Criminal Justice

2016-2017

## Meta-assessment Analysis Report for the College of Criminal Justice

Assessment is an important best-practice in higher education that helps programs determine whether key objectives are being met, identify areas for improvement, and develop actions to improve program effectiveness. Additionally, meaningful and effective assessment is the corner stone of many discipline-specific accreditations, as well as our University's regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Meta-assessment is an important tool for helping ensure that all programs at Sam Houston State University are engaging in a meaningful and effective continuous improvement assessment process.

Meta-assessment serves two important roles for the College and the University. First, it provides valuable feedback to units regarding ways in which they may continue to improve their annual assessment processes. Second, it provides College and University leaders with a way to observe the overall quality of assessment processes for their units. The purpose of this report is to detail the Meta-assessment process utilized by the College of Criminal Justice, the College's plan for distributing the completed Meta-assessment rubrics to their departments and programs, the assessment strengths observed within the reviewed assessment plans, the areas for improvement of assessment practices, the strategies for implementing those improvements, and the training or resources needed to implement those strategies.

### **Section 1: Description of Meta-assessment Methodology Employed by the College**

*Detail the College's Meta-assessment methodology and process. Include a description of who was involved (e.g., a committee of senior faculty or college administrators), your methodology for evaluating unit-level assessment plans, steps for ensuring reliability, and your timeline.*

The Associate Dean of Academic Programs (Dr. Holly Miller) selected a COCJ Meta-assessment committee consisting of our administration leaders including:

Dr. Holly Miller (Associate Dean of Academic Programs)  
 Ms. Lori Rodriguez (COCJ Assessment Specialist)  
 Dr. Bill Wells (Chair, Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology)  
 Dr. Sarah Kerrigan (Chair, Department of Forensic Science)  
 Dr. Nadav Morag (Chair, Department of Security Studies)  
 Dr. Danielle Boisvert (Director, Graduate Programs for the Department of CJC)  
 Dr. Lisa Muftic (Director, Undergraduate Programs for the Department of CJC)

The COCJ Meta-assessment team met in February 2018 to discuss the meta-assessment plan and go over the rubrics for the evaluation process. The Meta-assessment team consisted of the same group as last year, except for the addition of our new Assessment Specialist (L. Rodriguez). This year we decided to meta-assess all of the academic programs that we did not meta-assess last year. Four academic programs were chosen for meta-assessment. Three to four reviewers evaluated each of these programs. The reviews were turned into the Chair of the Meta-assessment committee (H. Miller) and the Assessment Specialist (L. Rodriguez) and they

compared the separate ratings for each program. This allowed for a second check of reliability of scoring. These were completed by March 2018.

## **Section 2: Plan for Distributing Completed Rubrics to Units**

*Detail the College's plan for sharing the completed meta-assessment rubrics with its departments and programs.*

After all rubrics were collected and examined, the Assessment Specialist sent copies and an overview of findings to each individual who was responsible for that academic program. Each individual responsible was asked to review the rubric assessments of their plan and to incorporate the findings and suggestions into this academic year's assessment plan.

## **Section 3: Observed Strengths within College Assessment Plans**

*Detail the general strengths identified by the College after reviewing its units' assessment plans. What general aspects of the annual assessment processes are units mastering? Are there any units that you would recommend serve as exemplary models?*

The four programs that were chosen for meta-assessment for the 2016-2017 academic year included the Criminal Justice BS/BA degree, the Victims Studies BS/BA degree, the Criminal Justice and Criminology MA degree, and the Forensic Science MS/PhD degree.

Each academic program has continued to set appropriate and specific goals and learning objectives. The learning objectives match the stated goals, and the goals are appropriate. Additionally, the majority of criteria listed are specific to the learning objectives and provide feedback on whether the students are learning the information that is imperative for the program goals. Of the four academic programs assessed this year, the Forensic Science MS/PhD assessment plan serves as the best model from our college.

## **Section 4: Observed Weaknesses within College Assessment Plans**

*Detail the general weaknesses identified by the College after reviewing its units' assessment plans. What general aspects of the annual assessment process are units struggling with?*

Over the last couple of years, we have worked hard to develop consistency in our leadership and in our assessment of academic programs. This is beginning to positively impact our assessment plans. The plans are becoming more sophisticated and appropriate indicators of what we expect our students to be learning in our degree programs. However, we will still have great work to do in increasing numbers of goals and indicators and utilizing our assessment to change academic programming and specific learning outcomes.

We continue to struggle to create helpful action plans from our results each year in order to affect student learning outcomes. We have maintained focus on how we assess rather than how we teach – or what we teach.

This year we were fortunate to be able to hire a college Assessment Specialist. Lori Rodriguez is already making a positive impact on our assessments.

**Section 5: Strategies Needed to Address Identified Weaknesses**

*Detail the College's strategies for addressing the general weaknesses identified after reviewing its units' assessment plans.*

We are distributing the meta-assessment rubric results with specific feedback and suggestions to the chairs/directors, and each assessment team member responsible for a program or unit. Each assessment team member that is responsible for a program or unit was asked to incorporate the feedback into the upcoming academic year. The results are being discussed at each level and will be discussed in individual meetings with each assessor and H. Miller and/or L. Rodriguez.

**Section 6: Training/Resources Needed to Implement the College's Improvement Strategy**

*Detail the types of training and resources that would assist the College with implementing its improvement strategies.*

The Office of Academic Planning and Assessment has done an outstanding job helping our faculty and staff on training needs and being willing to meet individually with our people if they are struggling with their assessment plans. We hope this continues.

I think one meeting with you and our team, each academic year, would be helpful. This would serve to keep the importance of this process on the minds of our assessors!

**Appendix A**

**(All Completed Meta-assessment Rubrics)**