

# ASSESSMENT SHOWCASE



Spring 2018

Academic Program Assessment

# THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT SHOWCASE

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### Notes

Site and delivery mode inventory is maintained by the Office of Institutional Research.

# SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COMMISSION ON COLLEGES (SACSCOC)

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. The Commission's mission is the enhancement of educational quality throughout the region and it strives to improve the effectiveness of institutions by ensuring that institutions meet standards established by the higher education community that address the needs of society and students. It serves as the common denominator of shared values and practices among the diverse institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Latin America and other international sites approved by the Commission on Colleges that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees. The Commission also accepts applications from other international institutions of higher education.

## PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION

### FOUNDATIONS FOR QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

#### SECTION 7

1. The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and (b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission. (Institutional Planning) [CR]

#### SECTION 8

1. The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success. (Student achievement) [CR]

2. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs. (Student outcomes: educational programs)

b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs. (Student outcomes: general education)

c. Academic and student services that support student success. (Student outcomes: academic and student services)

## THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

# MISSION

The University of Southern Mississippi is a community of engaged citizens, operating as a public, student-centered, doctoral-granting research university serving Mississippi, the nation, and the world. The University is dedicated to scholarship and learning, integrating students at all levels in the creation and application of knowledge through excellence in teaching, research, creative activities, outreach, and service. The University nurtures student success by providing distinctive and competitive educational programs embedded in a welcoming environment, preparing a diverse student population to embark on meaningful life endeavors.

# VISION

The University of Southern Mississippi aspires to be a model student-centered public research university that prepares students to thrive in a global society by providing high quality programs and transformative experiences in a community distinguished by inclusiveness.

# VALUES

The mission of the institution is supported by the following values:

1. Research and instructional excellence focused on student success at all teaching sites and through campus-based and distance education
2. Student engagement that fosters personal growth, professional development, and a lifelong commitment to wellness
3. An inclusive community that embraces the diversity of people and ideas
4. Institutional governance that respects academic freedom and faculty inclusion
5. A campus culture characterized by warmth and mutually-supportive connections among students, faculty, staff, and alumni
6. An approach to academics, research, and personal conduct based on integrity and civility
7. An evolving curriculum that fosters lifelong curiosity and critical thinking
8. Community participation that promotes social responsibility and citizenship

# INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Support student success to foster retention, progression and graduation
2. Promote teaching, research, and creative excellence
3. Strategically expand undergraduate and graduate enrollment
4. Strengthen economic and community partnerships
5. Invest in faculty and staff to maximize their potential
6. Promote a culture of inclusiveness of people and ideas
7. Enhance physical, technological, and financial infrastructure to support our mission, vision, and values
8. Improve efficiency and effectiveness of institutional processes and systems

## Assessment Policies

ADOPTED BY THE UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

### Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Participants:

- A. Educational Programs – IHL maintains the official inventory of USM academic programs (<http://www.mississippi.edu/research/stats.html>). To be in compliance with SACSCOC policy, all degree programs in this inventory must assess program-level student learning outcomes in accordance with the Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines. Programs that offer more than one degree option at the same level may combine assessments, provided appropriate distinctions are made within the report (e.g., BA/BS, MA/MS, or EdD/PhD). The UAC can recommend programs address multiple degrees within the same report by having several common student learning outcomes and at least one separate student learning outcome for each degree. Graduate programs that offer en route-fallback degrees may combine assessments, provided appropriate explanation is provided within the report. An en route degree is defined as a degree option for students pursuing, but not completing a doctoral degree (e.g. EdS/PhD, MS/PhD). This combined assessment should be explained in the assessment plan/report. UAC Approved 9.30.09; Modified 2.22.17; 3.6.18
- B. Certificate Programs – The Office of Institutional Research maintains the inventory of active USM certificate programs (<http://www.usm.edu/institutional-research>). To be in compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation policy, all stand-alone certificate programs in this inventory must assess program-level student learning outcomes in accordance with the Certificate Program Assessment Plan and Reporting Guidelines. A stand-alone certificate is defined as a program of study that does not have a “parent” degree. Certificates with parent degrees can be assessed within the parent degree assessment plan/report. If the assessment is embedded, it should be documented in the parent degree assessment plan/report. UAC Approved 9.30.09; Modified 2.29.12; 2.22.17

Emphasis Areas – ~~All teacher licensure programs must assess separately. All other~~ Programs with emphasis areas determine whether they assess at the program-level or the emphasis-level. Many programs have elected to separate their assessments at the emphasis-level. The UAC encourages programs to consider emphasis-level assessment if plans of study vary greatly. The UAC can recommend emphasis-level assessment if program-level assessment reports are deemed inadequate. The UAC can also recommend programs address emphasis areas within the same report by having several common student learning outcomes for the program and at least one separate student learning outcome for each emphasis area. UAC Approved 10.28.09; Modified 3.6.18

- C. Licensure Programs – Teacher licensure programs may combine assessments, provided appropriate distinctions are made within the report. These distinctions include at least one separate student learning outcome for licensure and at least two student achievement objectives, with one for licensure (Praxis). UAC Approved 3.6.18
- D. Stand-alone Minors – All stand-alone minors must assess minor-level student learning outcomes in accordance with the Certificate Program Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines. A stand-alone minor is defined as a program of study that does not have a “parent” degree. UAC Approved 10.28.09; Modified 02.29.12

### **Assessment of Administrative Outcomes Participants:**

- E. Administrative Support Services – The Office of Institutional Research (IR) maintains the official USM Organization Chart annually submitted to IHL. To be in compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation, all units with primary administrative support functions identified on the Organization Chart must assess in accordance with the Administrative Unit Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines. Administrative Support Units include all Vice President for Finance and Administration units, all Vice President for Advancement units and other organizational chart units not identified as an Educational Support Service, Research Unit, or community/Public Service Unit. UAC Approved 02.19.14; Modified 2.25.15
- F. Educational Support Services – The Office of Institutional Research (IR) maintains the official USM Organization Chart annually submitted to IHL. To be in compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation, all professionally staffed units with primary educational support functions identified on the Organization Chart must assess in accordance with the Administrative Unit Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines. Student organizations identified on the Organization Chart are assessed by their advising unit. Educational Support Units include Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs units (including similar Gulf Coast units), Vice President for Student Affairs units (including similar Gulf Coast units), and Special Assistant to the President for Military and Veterans Students Affairs. UAC Approved 02.19.14; Modified 2.25.15

G. Research within its educational mission, if appropriate

The Office of Institutional Research (IR) maintains the official USM Organization Chart annually submitted to IHL. To be in compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation all units with primary research or research support functions identified on the Organization Chart must assess in accordance with the Administrative Unit Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines. Research units include administrative units, centers, and institutes reporting to the Vice President for Research. UAC Approved 02.19.14

H. Community/Public Service within its educational mission, if appropriate

The Office of Institutional Research (IR) maintains the official USM Organization Chart annually submitted to IHL. To be in compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation, all units with primary community and/or public service functions must assess in accordance with the Administrative Unit Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines. Community and Public Service units include the Center for Community and Civic Engagement, Center of Higher Learning - Stennis, Institute for Disability Studies (university institute reporting to the Vice President for Research), Office of Professional Development and Educational Outreach (to be phased out as of June 30, 2015), Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and the Trent Lott National Center for Economic Development and Entrepreneurship. UAC Approved 02.19.14; Modified 2.25.15

# Plan and Report Guidelines

## Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines

### ACADEMIC PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT PLAN GUIDELINES:

1. All USM degree programs on the IHL Academic Program Inventory assess student learning outcomes at the program level.
2. Separate assessment plans are encouraged at the emphasis level.
3. ~~To assist with teacher education accreditation assessment requirements, all teacher licensure programs assess at the emphasis level. Licensure programs may choose to assess within one plan. These plans must have a minimum of one student learning outcome and one student achievement objective focused on licensure.~~
4. Programs that offer separate online emphasis areas or distinct emphasis areas at different sites assess separately.
5. Programs with two degrees at the same level in the same subject can choose to assess within one plan or separate plans. Graduate programs that offer [fallback en route](#) degrees may combine assessments. (See Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Participants Policy for items 1-5.)
6. Program-level Assessment Plans have a minimum of five outcomes. At least four outcomes must be Student Learning Outcomes and at least one outcome must be a Program Objective focused on student achievement. This Objective is labeled O/O in WEAVE. Student achievement includes enrollment and retention rates, graduation rate, job placement rate, licensing, and certification.
7. Student learning outcomes must show progressive distinction between degree levels (BA, MA, PhD) in the same academic unit.
8. Graduate Program Student Learning Outcomes/Measures must demonstrate (1) knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences.
9. Each student learning outcome must have two measures; one must be a direct measure. At least one measure is required for Program Objectives.
10. Overall course grades cannot be used as measures.

### ACADEMIC PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT REPORT GUIDELINES:

*Programs offered at multiple teaching sites or by multiple delivery modes must report their findings by site and include all sites and/or modes in the findings analysis.*

The following components are required for a complete assessment report:

1. **Findings** (separated by site/mode if applicable)
2. **Action Plans** (required in year 2 of the assessment cycle; recommended in year 1 if applicable)
3. **Updated Implemented Action Plans**
4. **Analysis** (Two Fields: Strengths or Progress and Continued Attention)
5. **Program Summary** - Programs are asked to describe the program and summarize program highlights of the past year. The summary field is needed to provide context to an outside reviewer. Program contributions, activities, and accomplishments should be included in this field.
6. **Continuous Improvement Initiatives/Additional Action Plans** - Any department-level or program-level action plans for improvement that are not necessarily tied to a specific student learning outcome or program objective should be described in this field. Efforts to improve enrollment and retention rates, graduation rate, job placement rate, licensing, and certification should be captured in this field.

7. **Closing the Loop/Action Plan Tracking** – Programs are asked to summarize the results of previous action plan implementation. This is the opportunity for programs to close the assessment loop – to report on the success (or nonsuccess) of previously implemented action plans. It is very important for programs to respond to this section with thought and detail. This section is where programs provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results.
8. ~~**Technology Use Narrative**—Programs are to state/explain the role of technology in the discipline and outcomes related to technology. Programs then develop a narrative to support this statement by providing program assessment results (if applicable), examples of technology being used to enhance student learning, examples of technology being used to meet program objectives/outcomes, and examples of providing access to and training in the use of technology.~~

## Certificate Program Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines

All certificate programs must identify a minimum of two student learning outcomes. Each student learning outcome must be assessed with at least one direct measure.

Certificate programs must assess annually, following program-level calendars. The following components are required for a complete assessment report:

1. Findings (separated by site/mode if applicable)
2. Action Plans
3. 2-part Analysis to include Closing the Loop as applicable

## Stand-alone Minor Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines

All stand-alone minors must identify a minimum of two student learning outcomes. Each student learning outcome must be assessed with at least one direct measure.

Stand-Alone Minors must assess annually, following program-level calendars. Stand-Alone Minors shall follow certificate reporting guidelines.

# Assessment Process Overview

SPRING 2018

2016-2017/2017-2018 Academic Program Assessment Plans are in place.

An assessment plan includes:

- a) Program Mission/Purpose
- b) Student Learning Outcomes
- c) Program Objective(s)
- d) Measures and Targets

A complete 2017-2018 Academic Program Assessment Report includes:

- e) Findings (due May 31)
- f) Action Plans (due June 30) - *Action Plans are required in Year 2 of assessment cycle*
- g) Analysis (due June 30)
- h) Annual Report (due June 30) - *alternative calendar programs have a due date of September 30*

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) directs the assessment process at the University of Southern Mississippi. Southern Miss follows a two-year planning and annual reporting cycle. With this cycle, assessment plans are in place for two years, action plans are developed every two years, and assessment reports are annual.

In the spring semester of the second year of the cycle, departments are asked to gather faculty; review past assessment reports (including data from the current year); reevaluate learning outcomes, measures, and targets; and develop action plans for the next assessment cycle implementation. With the two-year cycle, departments should have more than a full year of data (including any summer semester data) to evaluate when developing new action plans for improvement and revising assessment plans if needed.

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) reviews assessment reports in the fall semester to determine if:

- 1) Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines were followed
- 2) The Assessment Report supports appropriate SACSCOC standards

These reviews are returned to the departments and presented to the deans and the provost in the spring semester.

## Assessment Updates

The University Assessment Committee approved the following revisions to assessment policies and guidelines:

**Licensure Programs** – Teacher licensure programs may combine assessments, provided appropriate distinctions are made within the report. These distinctions include at least one separate student learning outcome for licensure and at least two student achievement objectives, with one for licensure (Praxis). UAC Approved 3.6.18

**En Route Programs** - Graduate programs that offer en route degrees may combine assessments, provided appropriate explanation is provided within the report. An en route\_degree is a degree option for students pursuing\_a doctoral degree (e.g. EdS/PhD, MS/PhD). This combined assessment should be explained in the assessment plan/report.

**Technology Use** – The Technology Use standard was removed in the revised SACSCOC standards, approved in December 2017. The Technology Use narrative requirement has been removed as a requirement in the annual assessment report.

# Student Learning Outcomes

A Student Learning Outcome (SLO) is a statement regarding knowledge, skills, and/or traits students should gain or enhance as a result of their engagement in an academic program. SLOs are the items that complete the sentence, “When they complete our program, students will be able to.....” A program does not need to state all possible student learning outcomes, but it should try to articulate those that are fundamental. A program may choose to rotate SLOs. Student learning outcomes should show progressive distinction between degree levels (BA, MA, PhD) in the same academic unit.

## Frameworks for Learning Outcomes

In *Assessing Student Learning, A Common Sense Guide*, Linda Suskie (2009) explains how understanding and using frameworks can assist with the task of identifying and articulating learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes in various frameworks could be summarized into three categories:

- Knowledge and conceptual understanding - remembering, replicating a simple procedure, and defining, summarizing, and explaining concepts or phenomena.
- Thinking and other skills:
  - Application – capacity to use knowledge and understanding in a new context
  - Analysis – ability to identify elements, relationships, and principles of a complex process
  - Evaluation, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making Skills – skills in making informed judgments
  - Synthesis – capacity to put together what one has learned in a new, original way
  - Creativity – abilities to be flexible, take intellectual risks, and be open-minded to new ideas
  - Critical Thinking – capacities to seek truth, clarity, and accuracy; distinguish facts from opinions
  - Information Literacy – broad set of skills reflecting today’s reality of research practice
  - Performance Skills – physical skills
  - Interpersonal Skills – abilities to listen, participate as an effective team member
- Attitudes, values, dispositions, and habits of mind – “personal and social responsibility skills”

(Suskie, 118 – 124)

## Expressing Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes should be neither too broad nor too specific:

Too vague: Students will demonstrate information literacy skills.

Too specific: Students will be able to use the college’s online services to retrieve information.

Better: Students will locate information and evaluate it critically for its validity and appropriateness.

(Suskie, 130)

# 2018 Showcase

## 2016-2017 MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY

### Student Learning Outcomes

**SLO 1: Competence in assessment and diagnosis**

Students will demonstrate competence in assessment and diagnosis of mental disorders and interpersonal and intrapersonal issues through a variety of measures.

**SLO 2: Knowledge of diversity and cultural issues**

Students will increase their understanding of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, SES, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, religious and spiritual values, and belief systems as it impacts working with families.

**SLO 3: Conceptualize and apply family therapy models**

Students will exhibit critical thinking skills in the conceptualization and application of family therapy models.

**SLO 4: Behave with Integrity and Professionalism**

Students will behave with integrity and professionalism in their interactions with colleagues, supervisors, clients, and faculty.

**SLO 5: Identify and resolve ethical dilemmas related to the practice of MFT**

Students will apply legal and ethical principles to clinical practice.

**SLO 6: Participate in professional development activities, acknowledging the value of lifelong learning**

Students will develop a professional identity by participating in professional activities and expressing an understanding of professional organizations.

### Program Objective

**O/O 6: Employment in MFT or Related Field**

Students who seek employment will be employed in MFT, or to provide related clinical services, within 90 days of graduating.

# Measures

A measure identifies evidence and methods used to determine achievement of expected outcomes. Targets show criteria for success for each student learning outcome. The findings that result from these measures should be used to demonstrate student learning and provide direction for improving learning.

Measures and Targets should show progressive distinction between degree levels (BA, MA, PhD) in the same academic unit. Simple rates, frequencies, or percentages of activities are not true measures of student learning outcomes.

## Direct Measures

The best measures for student learning are **direct measures** in which students demonstrate that they know or can do the specified learning outcome. Direct measures directly evaluate student work. Examples of direct measures include portfolios, exams, papers, projects, presentations, performances, standardized tests, licensure exams, comprehensives, and internship evaluations.

An overall course grade is NOT an acceptable direct measure. And in various cases, an overall exam, project, or paper grade is not an appropriate measure. However, the grading process can be used for assessment, if the classroom exam or assignment **actually measures** the learning outcome and the **criteria** for evaluating student work **is stated explicitly** in writing (usually in the form of a rubric).

## Indirect Measures

Indirect methods such as surveys and interviews ask students to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate it. Indirect measures also include job placement rates, admission rates into graduate programs, employer surveys, alumni surveys, focus groups, honors/awards earned by students & alumni, student participation rates in research publications, & conference presentations.

## Expressing Measures

Measures should be detailed and specific. Measurement should ensure that comparisons are “apples to apples,” and should ascertain that, for those programs that are offered at more than one site or by more than one mode, the measure can be duplicated at all sites/modes and the findings can be separated by site/mode. Evidence can include qualitative as well as quantitative information.

# 2018 Showcase

## MUSIC EDUCATION PHD

Program-level SLO Direct Measure

### **M 7: Theory Project Evaluations**

Student competency in music theory will be evaluated based on three projects, each designed to demonstrate student knowledge of and application to written music. An average score from all three projects will be used to measure student achievement for the established target level. Materials used for meeting course objectives and these projects include those established as reflecting best content for this area of study as evaluated and established through a variety of means including peer-review. Students must be actively engaged in research to meet the target score established for the assignment. Materials may include performance method books, teaching method books, and professional audio and/or video recordings, in addition to scholarly materials. Through the materials chosen for meeting this learning outcome, students gain knowledge of quality literature for teaching and learning in this area of study.

**Target:** 80% of students will earn an average score of 80 (out of 100) or higher on the three grade-averaged projects.

### **Findings (2016-2017) - Target: Met**

100% of students (4 of 4) earned a score of 80 (out of 100) or higher.

## WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES UNDERGRADUATE MINOR

Program-level SLO Direct Measure

### **M 1: Performance on major paper assignment**

All students in the Women's and Gender Studies undergraduate minor are required to take WS 301 Introduction to Women's Studies, which is offered at least once a year. As part of that class, students are required to write a paper in which they demonstrate their understanding of how gender manifests differently among diverse groups of people due to the **intersection of gender with other forms of inequality**, including but not limited to race, class, and sexuality. This paper is evaluated using a program approved, undergraduate-level rubric that assesses the student's understanding of how and why gender is a form of structural inequality in society.

**Target:** At least 70% of students enrolled in SOC 301 will earn an overall grade of 70% or better (i.e., at least "satisfactory" level) on the program-designed rubric for the paper that evaluates demonstrated understanding level of how gender intersects with other forms of inequality.

### **Findings (2016-2017) - Target: Met**

Only one section of WGS 301 was only taught in 2016-2017, which was in spring 2017. Among students enrolled in WGS 301, 20/24 students (83%) earned at least 70% on intersectionality component of their paper.

## SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TEACHING (TEACH MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTE) GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

Program-level SLO Direct Measure

### **M 3: Teacher Intern Assessment Instrument**

The Teacher Intern Assessment Instrument (TIAI) is a performance evaluation administered by the university clinical supervisor during the internship semester. The instrument was designed and validated for use across the state of MS. The TIAI scoring rubric is divided into five domains which are as follows: 1) Domain I: Planning and Preparation, 2) Domain II: Assessment, 3) Domain III: Instruction, 4) Domain IV: Learning Environment and 5) Domain V: Professional Responsibilities. Specific indicators from sections which are aligned with each of the related outcomes will be used for outcome assessment. The rubric rating scores are as follows: Target (3); Acceptable (2); Emerging (1); and Unacceptable (0). Total scores on the combined TIAI sections are used for both individual candidate and overall program evaluation.

**Target:** 90% of TMI candidates will score Target (3) or Acceptable (2) on the TIAI for providing a supportive learning environment (Domain III: Indicator 20 of TIAI).

**Findings (2015-2016) - Target: Not Met** (See associated Analysis on page 19.)

Fall 2016: 80% (4/5; fall-only assessment) received a score of Target (3) or Acceptable (2) on the TIAI for monitoring and adjusting the classroom environment to enhance social relationships, motivation, and learning (Domain IV: Indicator 20).

## HYDROGRAPHIC SCIENCE MS

Program-level SLO Indirect Measure

### **M 19: Alumni Survey Nautical Charting Question**

Alumni will be interviewed annually within four year of graduation to determine the suitability and currency of presented material. The Nautical Charting related question is: Creation of appropriate hardcopy and digital deliverables that meet the needs of the organization's customers. Deliverables usually include a Report of Survey fully documenting all aspects of the survey, creation of gridded depth surfaces (e.g., BAG) appropriate to the resolution of the desired deliverables, and S-57 or VPF feature files. Possible responses: 1. Far below needs; 2. Somewhat below needs; 3. Met needs; 4. Exceeded needs or assisted professional growth; 5. Substantially exceeded needs or instrumental in professional growth; N/A.

### **Connected Document**

- *Alumni Survey of Classes 2014, 2015, & 2016*

**Target:** Evaluation will be based on the Alumni Evaluation Instrument responses. Each question in the instrument will have a 1 to 5 scale response (far below needs to substantially exceeded needs), with an average of 3 (met needs) considered to be a minimum affirmative response.

**Findings (2016-2017) - Target: Met**

Survey conducted August 2017 of Alumni Classes of 2014 - 2016. There were 21 responses out of 39; score 3.00.

## CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY BS

Program-level SLO Indirect Measure

### M 10: Internship Survey

Construction Engineering Technology students are required to complete an internship as part of their degree requirements. At the end of the internship, their supervisor completes an evaluation of the intern's performance as related to his/her assigned tasks during the internship. The Supervisor's Evaluation form consists of 10 questions which have 1-5 point rating options for response. The ratings include: 1=extremely dissatisfied; 2=slightly dissatisfied; 3=satisfied; 4=considerably satisfied; 5=extremely satisfied.

**Target:** The achievement target will have been met if 80 percent or more assessed students achieve a three (3= satisfied) or higher rating based on the average of the responses to the 10 questions on the evaluation form.

### **Findings (2016-2017) - Target: Met**

**Hattiesburg On-Campus:** 100% (N= 17) 17/17 of the on-campus Construction Engineering Technology students received a 3=satisfied or higher average rating.

**Online:** 100% (N=14) 14/14 of the online Construction Engineering Technology students received a 3=satisfied or higher average rating.

## HYDROGRAPHIC SCIENCE MS

Program-level Student Achievement Measure

### **O/O 10: JOB PLACEMENT RATE: SACSCOC Federal Requirement 4.1, Student Achievement**

A Program Objective based on student achievement is required to address SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation Federal Requirement 4.1. This student evaluation of success is based on the job placement rate.

### **M 24: Job Placement Question**

Each graduating student will be interviewed about employment

**Target:** 90% of students will state they have jobs related to hydrographic science or a similar professional job of their choosing lined up upon graduation.

### **FINDINGS (2016-2017) - TARGET: MET**

Class of 2017 had 11 graduates: two U.S. Navy students returned to their parent command, two students have civilian jobs with the Navy, one student got a job with NOAA, two students got jobs with commercial survey companies, two foreign navy students returned to their country navies, and two students were hiring on with the Naval Oceanographic Office and Fleet Survey team as of this writing.

# Action Plans & Analysis

An action is an organized activity undertaken to help programs more effectively achieve intended outcomes, or an activity developed by program faculty to improve and grow the program for the future.

Analysis is the reflection of the program's findings within/for the criteria set for success on the program's intended outcomes. The Analysis is a summary of strengths and areas in which improvement is needed.

## The End of Assessment Is Action

In *Assessment Clear and Simple*, Barbara E. Walvoord (2010) states the goal of assessment is information-based decision making.

“Assessment helps the program determine how well it is achieving its outcomes and suggest effective steps for improvement. That means you should conduct assessment for yourselves and your students, not just for compliance with accreditors. You don't need to collect data you don't use; it's much more important to collect a small amount of useful data than to proliferate data that sit in a drawer or on a computer file. If you are collecting information you are not using, either start using it or stop collecting it. Instead of focusing on compliance, focus on the information you need for wise action.” (Walvoord, 2010, p. 5)

## The Most Common Actions Resulting from Assessment

Three common actions that result from assessment in the department, in general education, and in the institution:

- 1) Changes to curriculum, requirements, programmatic structures, or other aspects of the students' course of study
- 2) Changes to the policies, funding, and planning that support learning
- 3) Faculty development

(Walvoord, 2010, p.5)

## Are the Actions Working?

To close the loop, programs should not only use assessment information to inform action, but should come back and examine (and document) whether the action led to improvement of student learning.

# 2018 Showcase

## ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

### Action Plan

#### **Review of other archival programs and courses**

A review of other graduate archival programs was completed to determine need for modification/update of courses or course content or development of new courses. The review indicated some course titles and descriptions should be updated to reflect updated content and current professional terminology.

**Established in Cycle:** 2015-2016

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

## NONPROFIT STUDIES MINOR

### Action Plan

#### **Revising measures to use rubrics**

Based on feedback from the reviewer for our 2014-2015 reports, we will revise our measures and targets to use rubrics which specifically target the components/skills being assessed. By doing so, we will be better able to determine areas that need improvement. Although paper grades are permitted to be used as measures, they can conceal areas of concern if multiple components are included in the paper. As program reports are retrospective and not prospective, we have not changed the measures and targets for 2015-2016.

**Established in Cycle:** 2015-2016

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

#### **Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Performance on Nonprofit History Paper Assignment | **Outcome/Objective:** Understanding of the Unique Character and Structure of Nonprofit Organizations and Their Role in Civil Society

**Measure:** Performance on Nonprofit Organization Final Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Application of Best Practice Management Concepts to Nonprofit Practice

**Projected Completion Date:** 01/18/2017

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ann Marie Kinnell

**Additional Resources Requested:** None

## **NUTRITION AND DIETETICS (DIDACTIC PROGRAM IN DIETETICS/ COMMUNITY NUTRITION/ NUTRITION AND FOOD SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT) BS**

### Action Plan

#### **Written Communication Skills**

Findings were shared at the June 2017 faculty retreat. Faculty recognize the importance of writing skills across our curriculum and profession. Developing students' writing skills in an ongoing departmental objective. Several items have identified to address students' writing skills:

Faculty will use terminology such as technical writing, synthesis, abstract, etc. to help students recognize the development of writing skills taking place across several courses

- In NFS 365 (Dietetics Professions: Research and Practice) and NFS 430 (Experimental Foods), writing content will be increased with more feedback
- In NFS 463 (Community Nutrition), a synthesis paragraph from the annotated bibliography will be increased to 1-2 pages for 5 research articles
- In NFS 480 (Current Topics), a synthesis matrix will be incorporated earlier in the semester with corresponding writing activities
- In NFS 411 (Micronutrient Metabolism), the Health Claims abstract will be due after the presentation, as the students seem to have a better understanding on their synthesis of the findings after they present their findings.

These activities will be reviewed to assess effectiveness at the annual faculty retreat in 2018.

**Established in Cycle:** 2016-2017

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Capstone Course Assignments | **Outcome:** SLO 3: Ability to Communicate

**Implementation Description:** Instructors will develop several activities and opportunities to work on writing skills.

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/30/2018

**Responsible Person/Group:** Instructors with writing components in courses.

## **SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TEACHING (TEACH MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTE) GRADUATE CERTIFICATE**

### Analysis Answers

#### **What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?**

Assessment results from 2016-2017 indicated strengths in TMI candidates' basic literacy and mathematics skills as indicated by 100% of candidates passing Praxis Core and the Praxis II Subject specific exams. Praxis II subject specific exams also suggested that candidates have mastered content knowledge for their respective disciplines; 100% of candidates passed the Praxis II in their specific content areas. The Teacher Intern Assessment Instrument (TIAI) performance-based teaching assessment further indicated that TMI candidates were mastering program outcomes. Results from the Teacher Intern Assessment Instrument suggests that candidates were able to transfer knowledge

of pedagogy to their classroom teaching practice in a secondary setting particularly as it relates to using assessment to drive instruction and using content-specific knowledge to inform instruction. Exit interviews suggested that candidates were satisfied with the knowledge of content, pedagogy, and research they gained as a result of the program. Perhaps most significantly, all program graduates were able to find employment in a secondary school following completion of the degree.

**What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?**

The Secondary Education TMI certificate program has seen three different coordinators over the past 5 years. The shifting of leadership undermined consistency within the program and attention to continuous improvement. Inconsistencies in leadership help explain some, but not all, of the assessment results reported during this cycle. Current assessment results from the TIAI and exit interviews indicate that continued emphasis should be given to helping candidates create a supportive learning environment, integrate technology into their teaching, and use assessment data to inform instruction. While our sample size was small ( $n=5$ ) and our Not Met criteria were based on the ratings of 1 candidate, these results do suggest that the program must give candidates increased practice with technology and assessment during the initial three licensure classes. These results also suggest that candidates need additional coaching during their first year of teaching that would assist them in meeting program objectives. Since TMI candidates have limited pedagogical course work, continued attention must also be given to enhancing mentorships for the TMI completers as they participate in their initial teaching experiences.

## **SPEECH AND HEARING SCIENCES (DEAF EDUCATION) MS**

### Analysis Answers

**What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?**

It is the Speech and Hearing Sciences Department mission and the mission of the Master's in Deaf Education program to train and prepare students to become effective professionals in early oral intervention and early childhood education of children with hearing loss and their families. During the 2016-17 cycle, we were in the process of completing deep curriculum and program review as part of our CED (Council on Education of the Deaf) national accreditation self-study process. Several Student Learning Outcomes and Measures were modified to have a tighter alignment with our 7 Key CED Candidate Assessments. Performance on the 2016-17 Student Learning Outcomes show that the curriculum and instructional objectives are appropriate for student success and for differentiating learners. Measures were met in all categories. We expect 100% of our candidates (6/6) to obtain a composite score of 80% or better on all the components of their culminating professional student teaching practice externship, once the final grading for the experience occurs in July 2017 (the WEAVE report will be updated once the data is available).

Several students have been offered employment by their externship site or other sites. This is a strong indication that we are producing new professionals who demonstrate knowledge, skills and professional dispositions that are desirable traits for employers who are seeking personnel with appropriate and relevant knowledge and training in listening and spoken language development with children with hearing loss.

## **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION MBA**

### Analysis Answers

#### **What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?**

During the 2016-2017 cycle, we continued to heavily emphasize assessment in MBA required courses for a sixth year. Collectively, the current results show continued success for the hybrid course delivery format and for course sections on both campuses that serve a blended cohort of working professional students and younger students who lack work experience. We continue to use IVN technology to connect Hattiesburg and Coast sections of MBA courses, work around technical difficulties, and improve delivery formats each year. For a second year some of our assessments focused on results achieved in online sections of MBA classes and in some cases compared those results to our face-to-face hybrid sections. While minor differences in performance emerge in individual course assessments, the current results document no significant performance differences based on campus or delivery format.

For a fourth year, the MBA student population continues to diversify (based on age, education, work experience and geographic distributions). A blended cohort of students can be found in all groups (Hattiesburg, Coast and Online) but the Hattiesburg cohort continues to include the highest percentage of young, full time students. The College of Business views this as a continuing strength of the MBA program and the classroom learning experience.

We continue to improve hybrid courses that are shared between campuses, using IVN technology. When problems arise, faculty members are assisted by ITech personnel to resolve problems. Faculty members continue to develop innovative solutions to solve these problems, when the technology interferes with the classroom experience. In addition, graduate faculty members in the College are improving delivery methods and instructional resources in online courses -- as this segment of our market continues to grow.

The 2016-2017 results show strengths across all Student Learning Objectives, as MBA students met or exceeded goals in the following areas and MBA courses:

SLO1: Basic Business Knowledge - Targets met or exceeded in MBA 605, 610, 611, 620, and 650

SLO2: Leadership and Team Building - Targets met or exceeded in MBA 650 and 660

SLO3: Cultural and Ethical Awareness - Targets met or exceeded in Integrity Assurance Training, MBA 611 and 650

SLO4: Communication Skills - Targets met or exceeded in MBA 605, and 660

SLO5: Creative Critical Thinking Skills - Targets met or exceeded in MBA 605, 611, 650 and 660

Results on the 2017 MBA ETS Field Exam continue to be our most externally valid assessment measure, which compares our graduating MBA students to an international population of over 25,000 MBA students at 260 institutions. Again this year, our results indicate that the MBA graduating cohort remained in the top 50% for knowledge across 5 business areas tested. Therefore, we met the goal for O/O6 - our student learning objective in the program. In the 2017 MBA cohort, the group ranked at the 58th percentile, or in the top 42nd percentile group on this exam. Once again, MBA students with professional work experience outperformed younger, inexperienced students on this exam.

For the third reporting cycle, we continue to assess MBA courses offered in all formats: face-to-face, hybrid, hybrid IVN and online. Our results continue to show no significant differences in performance based on delivery format -- while our faculty continue to enhance delivery techniques in all delivery formats.

While the majority of our goals were met again, we will continue to monitor performance in future classes and cycles.

**What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?**

Results in the 2016-2017 cycle show that we must continue our attention on most learning outcomes, with primary focus on the strategic creative critical thinking learning outcome (SLO5) in the program. While improvement was noted in the current cycle, we did not meet our goals in 4 measures and 2 of these dealt with SLO5. In one of the 3 measures where the result was partially met (one cohort, but not all) one of these measures also addressed SLO5.

Our results generally show that MBA students are effective communicators, yet two of our "partially met" results assessed communication skills - specifically, written and graphic. Again, one (or more) cohorts met the performance goal, and one did not. Each year, a number of MBA faculty members assess communication skills and improve rubrics and instructions for performance expectations and this effort is ongoing.

Three of our "not met" results related to scores on the MBA ETS Field Exam in 2017. Again, we observed differences in cohorts and the Coast cohort outperformed the other groups. Hattiesburg performance was below the Coast cohort in all scores assessed. For the first year, we were able to view results for 2 graduating MBA students who completely the program in a primarily online class format. This cohort did not meet the ETS goals either, but it is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusion based on a very small cohort of 2 students.

One possible explanation for lower ETS results in 2017 may be attributable to the exam itself. In 2017, the ETS exam was revised and replaced with a new test format. So, we will monitor exam performance for another year or two to determine if this year's result was an anomaly of the test, unique to the 2017 MBA graduating cohort, to the delivery method of classes, or to some combination of all possible explanations.

In the prior cycle, we identified the need for more assessments of two learning outcomes (SLO2 and SLO3). In the current cycle, these learning outcomes were assessed more heavily with good results. Assessments of leadership and team building skills (SLO2) occurred in 3 required MBA classes, and evaluations of cultural and ethical reasoning (SLO3) took place in two required courses. So, we continue to make progress in this area.

We continue to work around technology problems associated with IVN delivery. In the current cycle, we made progress in this area yet continue to rely on ITech for assistance and on the reliability of the connections between campuses.

# Annual Reporting

## Annual Reporting Fields

The Assessment Report includes the following Annual Reporting data elements:

### **PROGRAM SUMMARY**

Programs are asked to summarize highlights of the past year for that particular academic program. The summary field is needed to provide context to an outside reviewer. Program contributions, activities, and accomplishments should be included in this field. Any data collected outside of the student learning outcome measures could be showcased in this field as well.

### **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES (ADDITIONAL ACTION PLANS)**

Any department-level or program-level action plans for improvement that are not necessarily tied to a specific student learning outcome or program objective should be described in this field. Efforts to improve enrollment and retention rates, graduation rate, job placement rate, licensing, and certification should be captured in this field.

### **CLOSING THE LOOP (ACTION PLAN TRACKING)**

Programs are asked to summarize the results of previous action plan implementation. This is the opportunity for programs to close the assessment loop – to report on the success (or nonsuccess) of previously implemented action plans. It is very important for programs to respond to this section with thought and detail. This section is where programs provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results.

# 2018 Showcase

## ENGLISH PHD

### Program Summary

**Summarize highlights of the past year for this particular academic program. Provide context to an outside reviewer.**

Graduate degrees offered by the Department of English are designed to prepare students for careers as scholars and teachers. The English department offers three degree programs (MA, PhD, and combined MA-PhD) in two emphasis areas (literature and creative writing), for a total of five degree plans (MA-literature, MA-creative writing, PhD-literature, PhD-creative writing, Combined-MA-PhD-literature). A third MA emphasis in English education has recently been added for which students are being recruited. Students in the combined MA-PhD are admitted directly into the PhD from the BA and complete requirements for the MA in route to the PhD, so until they receive the MA they are assessed as part of the MA program. The department currently assesses both emphasis areas together, but this practice is under-review. Moving forward, the department will identify the emphasis areas as part of the assessment process. The department includes about 31 active literature students and 41 active creative writing students during 2016-2017. A total of 24 literature students were completing PhD requirements, and 35 creative writing students were completing PhD requirements.

The Ph.D. degree with literature emphasis is predicated on an in-depth approach to the study of Anglo-American writing grounded in a historical and theoretical sweep of the discipline. The degree plan requires students to take courses in each of the five designated literary period areas, a nontraditional literature course (ethnic, postcolonial, African-American, or children's literature), two criticism/methods courses, a course on literary theory, and an addition course within the literary period of specialization. Building on a comprehensive foundation allows the Ph.D. in literature to move toward developing expertise in an area of specialization as students define their field of study, moving toward a dissertation. After completing coursework, Ph.D. in literature students put together a (historical) reading list identifying a period of specialization, a theoretical/methodological reading list identifying a critical approach, and a genre or literary specialization reading list identifying textual area of study. These lists lead to a set of comprehensive written exams and a two-hour oral examination by a committee of scholars within the department and area of specializations.

The Ph.D. degree with creative writing emphasis is predicated on developing a scholarly and research based approach to expressive writing and creative activity, requiring the study of contemporary writing with a grounding in historical and theoretical context. The plan requires students to take two courses in a literary period area of the student's choosing, a nontraditional literature course (ethnic, postcolonial, African-American, or children's literature), courses in modernist and contemporary literature, one criticism/methods courses, and a course on literary theory. In addition, the Ph.D. degree with creative writing emphasis requires a minimum of four writing seminars (workshops) in a genre (fiction or poetry) and two seminars in craft in a genre (fiction or poetry).

All students in the program who teach as part of their assistantship take a 3-credit course on the practice and theory of composition pedagogy. The English department maintained its commitment to helping

graduate students professionalize by offering extracurricular workshops on giving conference presentations, transforming seminar papers into articles for publication, and entering the job market. Students made presentations or gave readings at both national and international conferences, and they published critical articles, reviews, stories, and poems in scholarly journals and literary magazines. The English Creative Writing graduate program (aka Center for Writers) is nationally ranked by U.S. News and World Report.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION EDD/PHD**

Continuous Improvement Initiatives.

**Any department-level or program-level action plans for improvement that are not necessarily tied to a specific student learning outcome or program objective should be described in this field.**

Recently implemented efforts to address continuous improvement include the implementation of REF 889: *Dissertation Process* as a required course in the program in which students learn about the dissertation requirements, select a dissertation committee, and write a pre-proposal. Another effort is the implementation of REF 807: *Literature Review* which is designed to support students in completing chapter two, and EDA 792: *Dissertation Bootcamp* which provides a structure for students to set goals and devote time to their dissertation in a 4-week summer course. The next steps are to create incentives for dissertation committee chairs and committee members to reach out to students who do not remain in regular contact, and for the department chair to develop a format for students to express issues they are having with making progress. Another initiative to address this program is currently under discussion--the creation of a capstone project to replace the dissertation for the Doctor of Education program because it is a practitioner-related degree. The Doctor of Philosophy will retain the dissertation because it is a program designed to prepare students to become independent researchers. This will have the result of reducing the dissertation load in our department.

## **ART BA**

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

**Any department-level or program-level action plans for improvement that are not necessarily tied to a specific student learning outcome or program objective should be described in this field.**

The Art BA Program will target the following initiatives for the 2017-18 academic year:

1. Focus will continue to be on recruitment and retention for the next academic year. The program seeks a 5% annual growth in enrollment. We will continue to work closely with the RISE Creative program in Graphic Design to develop a comprehensive brochure for the school, participate in recruitment events, and utilize the power of social media.
2. Actively seek funding for scholarships for our students.
3. Offer educational opportunities in the museum world by providing facilitating internships.
4. Provide opportunities for students to travel to regional museums for education and experience though the collection of course fees for Art History classes, newly implemented in Fall 2016.
5. Evaluate the needs of our curriculum, and add new courses where appropriate.

## **ART (SCULPTURE) BFA**

Closing the Loop

**Summarize the results of previous action plan implementation. Provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results.**

In the past our action plans included the issue we are having or had with the workload. The reality is that our students are moving into fields where, although speaking and writing are highly regarded and sought after, the first thing graduate schools, fabrication studios, and galleries are looking at is the sculpture work. None of these folks are going to read a 15 to 20 page research paper as required for the writing intensive component of the capstone. It's hard to sell students that the paper is important. The first part of the solution was to make the papers integral to the needs of the area, so we included artist statements, project proposals, etc and other discipline specific materials. We did this years ago, but the result of that was having the paper and its components become vastly more important in the career trajectory of the students, which put tremendous weight on the both the written component and the exhibition component.

As a result the second part that we are working on right now is the workload issue. Our analysis of last year's result shows a stunning increase in the quality of the work for both the exhibition and the written components. Less stress for the students also meant they leave here with a positive feeling rather than cursing the faculty as they leave the studio for the last time. It is also much less stressful for the faculty, who now get to make real inroads in helping the students with their work.

## **BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION MBA**

Annual Reporting Fields

**Program Summary. Summarize highlights of the past year for this particular academic program. Provide context to an outside reviewer.**

The 2016-2017 year was the eighth year of current MBA program requirements, and our assessment results indicate continued improvement in learning outcomes across the eight required courses in the MBA program. Our assessment activities continue to mature and to improve. Notable improvements this year included program review for AACSB reaccreditation, continued monitoring of admission options for students, development of more assessments comparing online courses to hybrid (FTF) courses, and development of new options in business analytics.

In September, 2016 our Peer Review Team (PRT) for AACSB continuation of accreditation completed the campus visit. The MBA program requirements, assessment strategy and information, students and admission requirements were part of this review. The result for the College of Business was a continuation of accreditation for the next 5 years.

We continue to monitor the effect of several changes to admission requirements, initially reported in the 2014-2015 cycle. While these changes have eliminated barriers for MBA program entry, increased program enrollment and the diversity of the student cohort, we now are able to evaluate the success of graduates who were admitted using new requirements. Specifically, we have evaluated the option of an admission test waiver based on 5 years or more of progressive, managerial work experience. At the

conclusion of the MBA programs, students who were granted the work experience waiver perform at a very high level in the program, judged by cumulative GPA. We have found no significant differences in the final GPA's of these students, compared to those who took an admission exam such as the GMAT or GRE. In a similar vein, we are not observing performance differences between students who took the GRE or the GMAT exam. These adjustments in admission requirements have had the desired effects with no negative impact on learning in the program.

The current cycle includes more assessment evidence comparing outcomes in online MBA courses to hybrid IVN courses. These assessments show no real differences in learning outcomes based on delivery format. In the current cycle, we completed the process of offering all required MBA courses online. This cycle completed the "roll out" process for the degree in an online format; this option continues to grow enrollment in our program, with more working professionals choosing Online as the campus for the MBA program.

During the 2016-2017 year, we observed more growth in the MBA with the Sport Event Security Emphasis area -- a unique MBA program in the world that attracts a distinct segment of graduate students. We also made progress on electives in business analytics during the year. The course in Marketing Analytics was formally approved by Graduate Council and added to the bulletin. We also pilot tested an elective in Health Care Analytics during the spring semester. During the summer 2017 term, we offered a new elective in Executive Level Analytics, and began the process to update the Human Resource management elective to content that included "people analytics" used by business organizations. That course was offered during the summer as well. Two of these analytics electives were offered in an online format, and two in a hybrid format. We plan continued progress in the business analytics area, with the goal of formalizing an additional emphasis area in Analytics in the near future.

**Continuous Improvement Initiatives. Any department-level or program-level action plans for improvement that are not necessarily tied to a specific student learning outcome or program objective should be described in this field.**

During the 2016-2017 cycle there were several continuous improvement initiatives for the MBA program.

1. Improvement in the delivery of hybrid IVN courses, as professors continue to learn from earlier experiences and iTech provides more direct assistance to address technology issues.
2. Improvement in the delivery of online courses. Graduate faculty members continue to update course materials and to participate in training sessions held in the College of Business or by the Office of Online Learning.
3. Completed roll out of the online MBA degree program during the 2016-17 cycle and developed a scheduling plan to alternate hybrid and online course offerings during the academic year. At the beginning of the next cycle, all 8 required courses are being offered either in a hybrid or online format both fall and spring semester. This will make it easier for all students to access required courses in any given semester, and to complete the program at a faster rate. This is especially important for our working professional MBA students, who now comprise approximately 75% of the total MBA cohort.

4. Development of new electives in Business Analytics, previously described in the Program Summary.
5. Continued work to promote the online MBA at Southern Miss, in partnership with the Office of Online Learning. We actively marketed to online prospects and developed a response strategy for contacting prospects quickly. The MBA office also began tracking demographic and geographic information on our online MBA students. We were able to provide this analysis to the Office of Online Learning -- and they are using our data to more accurately target prospective MBA students and distinct geographic regions.
6. Our general assessment culture for the program continues to mature. During this cycle, new faculty members began teaching MBA courses for the first time. They were mentored by experienced graduate faculty and by the MBA Director on the broad learning outcomes established for the program, the importance of assessments in required courses, and the need to provide assessment reports at the conclusion of a semester. Reports were received from all of the new faculty members, so our assessment culture continues to improve.

**Closing the Loop. Summarize the results of previous action plan implementation. Provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results.**

During the 2016-2017 year, specific loop-closing activities included the following:

1. Continued analysis of MBA ETS Field Exam performance indicators. During the current cycle, the test format changed. We noted lower performance in the accounting and finance areas. As completed in a prior cycle, we will analyze results and the most often missed questions on this exam again in the next cycle, when the data become available. Other assessment and program results were also presented to the general faculty and to the graduate faculty in the College, and included in our annual AoL report. This wide dissemination of our assessment results to the faculty is an important loop-closing activity.
2. We continue to blend our MBA students in required courses in the program, to increase learning outcomes. A number of earlier assessments indicate better performance by working professional students, when compared to younger students who lack work experience. Many faculty members deliberately create student groups that include both types in courses, in an effort to elevate the performance levels of our younger students. We will continue this loop-closing strategy.
3. Continued improvement in hybrid IVN delivery in MBA courses, including increased expectations from our students in these courses. Our MBA students are being required to be more active participants in these virtual classes when the faculty member is not present at that location. This is important for our program quality, and also an important loop-closing activity for our MBA students. As graduates of the program, they must be prepared to be active participants in virtual meetings, in an increasingly globalized business world.
4. Development of new elective options in business analytics, which is important for our students and program quality and is a definite expectation of AACSB, our accrediting agency.
5. We also saw improvements based on smaller adjustments in individual MBA courses, based on results in prior cycles. Several earlier initiatives were finished during the current cycle: improving understanding

of marketing plan components in MBA 605, improving delivery techniques in IVN and online courses in 3 required classes, and assessing most often missed questions on the MBA ETS exam so we can specifically address these weak areas in future courses.

6. The current cycle also resulted in several action plans In Progress, based on prior assessments. In MBA 611, work continues to enhance understanding of ethical decision making and to clarify expectations in case analyses. In MBA 610, the professor is placing greater emphasis on the importance of graphic communication skills. In MBA 600, the professor is clarifying and enhancing expectations for leadership and team building skills. In MBA 660, a new faculty member is improving assessment measures for the course when offered in an online delivery format.

These loop closing activities, on the macro and micro levels, remain a high priority in our program and our culture of assessment.

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## RECOMMENDED READING

### **General Assessment Resources**

Connecting the Dots: Developing Student Learning Outcomes and Outcomes-Based Assessment: 2nd Edition

Ronald S. Carriveau

Stylus Publishing, LLC ©2016

The First-Year Seminar: Designing, Implementing, and Assessing Courses to Support Student Learning and Success: Volume Five

Daniel B. Friedman

University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition ©2012

Introduction to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback, and Promote Student Learning: 2nd Edition

Dannelle D. Stevens, Antonia J. Levi, and Foreword by Barbara E. Walvoord

Stylus Publishing, LLC ©2013

Real-Time Student Assessment: Meeting the Imperative for Improved Time to Degree, Closing the Opportunity Gap, and Assuring Student Competencies for 21st-Century Needs

Peggy L. Maki and Foreword by George D. Kuh

Stylus Publishing, LLC ©2017

High-Impact ePortfolio Practice: A Catalyst for Student, Faculty, and Institutional Learning

Bret Eynon, Laura M. Gambino, and Foreword by George D. Kuh

Stylus Publishing, LLC ©2017

Assessment Clear and Simple

Barbara E. Walvoord

John Wiley & Sons ©2010

Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide

Linda Suskie

John Wiley & Sons ©2010

Designing Effective Assessment: Principles and Profiles of Good Practice

Trudy W. Banta, Elizabeth A. Jones, Karen E. Black

John Wiley & Sons ©2009

Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers

Thomas A. Angelo & K. Patricia Cross

John Wiley & Sons ©1993

The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach

Judith Grunert O'Brien

John Wiley & Sons ©2008

Effective Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment in College

Barbara E. Walvoord

John Wiley & Sons ©2010

Introduction to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback and Promote Student Learning

Dannelle D. Stevens

Stylus Publishing ©2005

### **Discipline-Specific Assessment Resources**

Assessment in Engineering Programs: Evolving Best Practices

Edited by William E. Kelly

© AIR

Assessment of Student Learning in College Mathematics: Towards Improved Programs and Courses

Edited by Bernard L. Madison

© AIR

Assessment of Student Learning in Business Schools: Best Practices Each Step of the Way

Edited by Kathryn Martell and Thomas

Calderon

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