

Detailed Assessment Report  
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2012-2013 Instructional Technology MS

**Mission / Purpose**

The Master of Science of Instructional Technology is a systematic graduate-level study program designed for individuals who wish to become dynamic and innovative leaders in the field of instructional technology, whether they are in the private or academic sector. The mission of the Master of Science in Instructional Technology is to prepare instructional technology professionals with a strong theoretical base and practical hands-on experience in the design, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of leading-edge educational technologies.

**Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

**SLO 1: Apply technology integration methods**

Apply methods of integrating technology into the educational curriculum or training program.

**Related Measures:**

**M 1: Alumni Survey (Technology Integration Methods)**

Respondents to the Graduate Alumni Survey will be asked to specify their attitude/perception toward IT 636 (Instructional Systems Design) as a beneficial course in the program.

Source of Evidence: Alumni survey or tracking of alumni achievements

**Target:**

80% will indicate a rating of 5 for "Most Valuable" or a rating of 4 for "Somewhat Valuable" on Question #6 (new form) - "Please rate the following Core and Elective Courses in terms of content covered, applicability, and the amount of information learned."

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Not Met**

50% (2/2: summer, fall, and spring combined) of the alumni rated Question #7 (value of IT 636) as a 4 for "Valuable" or a 5 for "Most Valuable."

NOTE: Two additional alumni did not respond to the survey this year.

**M 2: Course Project for IT 636**

Course project in IT 636 (Instructional Systems Design) are evaluated by examining the following categories: good overall design and layout, effective use of instructional strategies, effective use of assessment tools, information is thorough/clear, relevancy of instructional content, and transference of ideas presented from written report to the multimedia tutorial or Web-based course.

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

**Target:**

80% of students will receive an acceptable score (80% out of a 100%) on the course project.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (3/3: spring only) of the students enrolled received an acceptable score (90% out of a 100%) on the final course project.

**M 11:Capstone Project**

Capstone Projects in IT 699 are evaluated with a rubric addressing the following categories: design, quality, integration, instructional strategies, and technology. Students who defend their Capstone Projects will do so successfully using the rubric criteria given.

Source of Evidence: Capstone course assignments measuring mastery

**Target:**

80% of the students will exceed the minimum passing score (10/15) on the Capstone Project rubric.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

No student is completing the capstone project at this time.

**SLO 2:Apply technology management methods**

Apply appropriate methods of technology management to enhance the teaching and learning environments.

**Related Measures:**

**M 3:Alumni Survey (Technology Management Methods)**

Respondents to the Graduate Alumni Survey will be asked to specify their attitude/perception toward IT 709 (Administration of Instructional Technologies) as a beneficial course in the program and whether the program helped them learn how to manage technology.

Source of Evidence: Alumni survey or tracking of alumni achievements

**Target:**

80% will indicate a rating of 5 for "Most Valuable" or a rating of 4 for "Somewhat Valuable" for Question #6 (new form) - "Please rate the following core courses in terms of the content covered, applicability, and the amount of information learned," and 5 for "Outstanding" or a rating of 4 for "Very Good" to Question #8 (new form)- "Program has helped me manage technology at either an individual level or in larger environments (e.g., lab)."

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (2/2: summer, fall, and spring combined) of the alumni rated Question #6 (value of IT 709) as either a 4 for "Somewhat valuable" or 5 for "Valuable."

100% (2/2: summer, fall, and spring combined ) of the alumni rated Question #8 (program helping them to learn management of technology) as either a 4 for "Very Good" or 5 for "Outstanding."

NOTE: Two additional alumni did not respond to the survey this year.

**M 4:Course Projects in IT 709**

Course projects in IT 709 (Administration of Instructional Technologies) are evaluated based upon: originality, organization, readability, supported rationale/opinions, documentation, and

professional quality.

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

**Target:**

80% will receive an acceptable score (80% out of a 100%) on all of the projects students are required to complete.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (9/9: summer only) of the students enrolled in IT 709 received an acceptable score (80% out of 100%) on all of the projects required.

**SLO 3: Demonstrate design and development skills**

Demonstrate the skills necessary to design and develop a multimedia or Web-based project.

**Related Measures:**

**M 5: Alumni Survey (Design & Development Skills)**

Respondents to the Graduate Alumni Survey will be asked to specify their agreement with their career preparation and/or graduate study in the areas of Question #8 (new form), "Value of "hands-on" lab experiences," and "Program has helped me design and develop multimedia or Web-based projects."

Source of Evidence: Alumni survey or tracking of alumni achievements

**Target:**

80% will indicate a rating of 5 for "Outstanding" or a rating of 4 for "Very Good" on Question #8 for "Value of hands-on lab experiences" and "Program has helped me design and develop multimedia or Web-based projects."

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (2/2: summer, fall, and spring combined) of the alumni rated Question #8 as either a 4 for "Very Good" or a 5 for "Outstanding."

NOTE: Two additional alumni did not respond to the survey this year.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

For full information, see the *Details of Action Plans* section of this report.

**Capstone Projects**

*Established in Cycle:* 2008-2009

During 2008-2009, only 50% of the alumni rated Question #F - "Usefulness of completing a Capstone Project or Thesis," with a rati...

**Lab experiences**

*Established in Cycle:* 2008-2009

From the alumni survey during 2008-2009 year, the respondents did not report a positive experience with the lab-based experience...

**M 6: Course Projects in IT 636 and IT 644**

The quality of course projects are based upon individual instructor's rubrics relating to the courses: IT 636 (final project in Instructional Design Systems) and IT 644 (various projects in Advanced Hypermedia Development).

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

**Target:**

80% will receive an acceptable score (80% out of a 100%) on the final project completed for IT 636 and all of the given projects completed for IT 644.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (3/3: spring only) of the students enrolled in IT 636 received an acceptable score (80% out of 100%) on the final design project required. IT 644 was not offered during this academic year.

**M 11:Capstone Project**

Capstone Projects in IT 699 are evaluated with a rubric addressing the following categories: design, quality, integration, instructional strategies, and technology. Students who defend their Capstone Projects will do so successfully using the rubric criteria given.

Source of Evidence: Capstone course assignments measuring mastery

**Target:**

80% of the students will exceed the minimum passing score (10/15) on the Capstone Project rubric.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

No student is completing the capstone project at this time.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

For full information, see the *Details of Action Plans* section of this report.

**Change requirements for Capstone**

*Established in Cycle: 2011-2012*

Beginning fall 2012 incoming students are required to take a written comprehensive exam, along with completing a mini-capstone p...

**SLO 4: Demonstrate research methods and results**

Demonstrate application of research methods and results to improve teaching and learning environments in relation to technology.

**Related Measures:**

**M 7: Alumni Survey (Research Methods & Results)**

Respondents to the Graduate Alumni Survey will be asked to specify their attitude/perception toward IT 742 as a beneficial course within the program and whether the program helped them apply research methods and results.

Source of Evidence: Alumni survey or tracking of alumni achievements

**Target:**

80% will indicate a rating of 5 for "Outstanding" or a rating of 4 for "Very Good" on Question #12 in Part I - "Ability to apply research methods and results to explain instructional technology problems and issues."

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (1/1: summer, fall, and spring combined) of the alumni rated Question #8 as 5 for "Outstanding;" the other alumni respondent did not have an opinion.

NOTE: Two additional alumni did not respond to the survey this year.

**M 8:Course Projects in IT 601 & IT 742**

Course projects in IT 601 (Foundations of Instructional Technology) and IT 742 (Research in Instructional Systems Technology) are evaluated with a rubric that assesses students' understanding of research design, methods, procedures, impact of research upon the field, and apply critical evaluation of research studies and their practical applications.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

80% will receive an acceptable score (80% out of a 100%) on an assignment for IT 601 that includes a critical evaluation of research studies, and on the final course project for IT 742 that involves writing a research report.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

Neither IT 601 or IT 742 were offered this academic year.

**M 12:Thesis Defense**

Students will successfully defend their Master's Thesis based upon the recommendation and approval of the Master's Committee that involves three IT faculty members.

Source of Evidence: Senior thesis or culminating major project

**Target:**

Ninety percent (90%) of students will successfully defend their Master's Thesis based upon the committee's approval.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

No student is completing the capstone project at this time.

**SLO 5:Practice communication skills**

Practice oral and written communication skills that will assist in future professional development in technology-related fields.

**Related Measures:****M 9:Alumni Survey (Communication Skills)**

Respondents to the Graduate Alumni Survey will be asked to specify their agreement concerning whether the IT program has helped improve their oral and written communication skills, "Completing course projects and/or Capstone/Thesis have helped improve my written and verbal communication skills."

Source of Evidence: Alumni survey or tracking of alumni achievements

**Target:**

80% will indicate a rating of 5 or "Outstanding" or a rating of 4 for "Very good" for Question #8 (new form) "Completing course projects and/or Capstone/Thesis have helped improve my written and verbal communication skills."

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (1/1: summer, fall, and spring combined) of the alumni rated Question #8, "Completing course projects and/or Capstone/Thesis have helped improve my written and verbal communication skills" a 5 for "Outstanding;" the other alumni respondent did not have an opinion.

NOTE: Two additional alumni did not respond to the survey this year.

**M 10:Projects in IT 636**

Students in IT 636 (Instructional Systems Design) are evaluated for their written and oral communication skills surrounding their final projects. Written projects are evaluated based upon thoroughness, completion of all the sections, writing style, ideas and creativity, and adhering to the course content. The oral video presentation is evaluated using a rubric that addresses the following areas: content, organization, and media material.

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

**Target:**

80% of students will receive an acceptable score (80% out of a 100%) on the final written project based upon the instructor's evaluation and oral video presentation using a specified rubric.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

100% (3/3: spring only) of the students enrolled received an acceptable score (90% out of a 100%) on the final written and oral video presentation of the course project.

**M 11:Capstone Project**

Capstone Projects in IT 699 are evaluated with a rubric addressing the following categories: design, quality, integration, instructional strategies, and technology. Students who defend their Capstone Projects will do so successfully using the rubric criteria given.

Source of Evidence: Capstone course assignments measuring mastery

**Target:**

80% of the students will exceed the minimum passing score (10/15) on the Capstone Project rubric.

**Findings (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

No student is completing the capstone project at this time.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

For full information, see the *Details of Action Plans* section of this report.

## **Change requirements for Capstone**

*Established in Cycle: 2011-2012*

Beginning fall 2012 incoming students are required to take a written comprehensive exam, along with completing a mini-capstone p...

### **Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)**

#### **Communicate Criteria for Presentations**

Improving the communication process between teacher-student concerning the requirements for the final presentations in IT 636 (Instructional Systems Design) is needed. Using different communication mediums such as e-mail, paper copies, and announcing the criteria for the presentations in class will be performed. Also, requiring students to show a draft of the presentation to the instructor a week prior is recommended. That way, the instructor can see whether the students are aware and understand the process of presenting the final design projects to the class.

**Established in Cycle:** 2007-2008

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** Medium

**Implementation Description:** Spring 2009 or next course offering

**Responsible Person/Group:** Instructor

#### **Communication on Design Project**

Improving the communication process between teacher-student concerning requirements for the final design project in IT 636 (Instructional Systems Design) is needed. Requiring students to demonstrate their progress on their projects either weekly or every two weeks will be performed to ensure that students are on-track and not falling behind (or procrastinating). In addition, requiring students to meet personally to discuss problems, questions, issues, etc. concerning the design project should be undertaken to maintain consistent communication. That way, if students are uncertain about how to proceed with their projects, such issues can be resolved prior to the final deadline.

**Established in Cycle:** 2007-2008

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** Medium

**Implementation Description:** Spring 2009 or next course offering

**Responsible Person/Group:** Instructor

#### **Capstone Projects**

During 2008-2009, only 50% of the alumni rated Question #F -"Usefulness of completing a Capstone Project or Thesis," with a rating of 4 for "Somewhat valuable" (the other rating for this question was a 3 for "Average"). However, important to note in these results is that only one of the alumni who responded to this question "actually completed the Capstone Project." Therefore, the response made sense in that one alumni would find the Capstone Project valuable, and the other would not. This is why developing an action plan for this area has been difficult.

In 2009-2010, 3/3 alumni who had completed a Capstone Project that year indicated a score of 4 for "Very Good" or 5 for "Outstanding" on the questions *Usefulness of completing a Capstone Project or Thesis*. Thus, the previous year's results were skewed because of the low number of alumni who responded, and the fact that only one student completed the Capstone Project.

**Established in Cycle:** 2008-2009

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** Low

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

**Measure:** Alumni Survey (Design & Development Skills) | **Outcome/Objective:** Demonstrate design and development skills

**Implementation Description:** Fall 2009

**Responsible Person/Group:** IT Faculty

**Lab experiences**

From the alumni survey during 2008-2009 year, the respondents did not report a positive experience with the lab-based experiences. Only two alumni responded to that survey that could play a factor in the results. The faculty had two assumptions as to why such responses occurred: (1) either the software in the labs related to course projects may be out-of-date, and thus, do not match recent versions that students may have on their own computers, and/or (2) the students did not fully utilize the labs because they already had access to the software elsewhere, and thus, did not completely utilize the lab themselves to complete projects. This is the first set of alumni who rated this particular question as less than satisfactory, so we decide to wait and see what happens with the next set of alumni in year 2009-2010.

The results did vary from the previous year in that the alumni from 2009-2010 reported higher ratings with the computer-lab facilities. 80% (4/5: summer, fall, and spring combined) rated computer-lab facilities as either "very good" or "outstanding." In addition, in fall 2010, new computers will be purchased for courses that are computer intensive. These will include Mac computers and contain updated software programs on the system. Hence, the computer-lab facilities will be improved to counter these problematic issues.

**Established in Cycle:** 2008-2009

**Implementation Status:** Terminated

**Priority:** Medium

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

**Measure:** Alumni Survey (Design & Development Skills) | **Outcome/Objective:** Demonstrate design and development skills

**Implementation Description:** Fall 2010

**Responsible Person/Group:** IT Faculty

**Change requirements for Capstone**

Beginning fall 2012 incoming students are required to take a written comprehensive exam, along with completing a mini-capstone project. In the past, the students could choose between either completing and defending a capstone project or take the written comprehensive examination. However, the department is now requiring new students to complete the written comprehensive examination early in the semester, and then complete a smaller capstone project toward the end of the semester with an oral defense. As a result, new policies and procedures will need to be in place to help students know what needs to be completed. In addition, new evaluation criteria/rubrics will need to be developed to assess the final capstone project and oral defense.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High



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

**Measure:** Capstone Project | **Outcome/Objective:** Demonstrate design and development skills | Practice communication skills

**Modify Plan of Study**

In fall 2013, the faculty intends to revise the program plan of study so that graduate students can complete the IT program either completely online or hybrid format. Currently, the program is about 80% online (two courses are hybrid). In addition, the program will become a 30-hour program instead of a 33-hour program by removing the Capstone requirement. Thus, changing the program requirements will help those students desiring an online program (because of time scheduling and travel).

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/29/2013

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

Overall, the assessments have demonstrated a consistent progression of students completing and being satisfied with the current Master's of Instructional Technology program this past year. Majority of students still value the applicability of the courses being taught in the IT program as they apply to the workplace and/or for assisting them in pursuing other degrees. The ratings of the required program core courses have been quite consistent over the years, which is a good indication of program stability. Both alumni indicated that the positive features of the MSIT program are the interaction between students and faculty. They both felt that the program was open and friendly, and enjoyed the consideration that the faculty gave to them as individuals. Areas that they found strong on the MSIT Alumni Survey included: (1) quality of instruction, (2) application of technology into teaching and learning, (3) issues concerning management of technology, and (4) design and development of technology-based projects. They both gave a positive overall evaluation of the program that had been consistent over the years. The program is student-focused which has helped with retention and graduation.

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

There were some inconsistencies in the findings of the IT Alumni Survey worth noting. The question that asked about the value of *IT 636 - Instructional Systems Design* course was not met based on the targeted measurement. One of the alumni did not rate this question as a 5 for "Most Valuable" or a rating of 4 for "Somewhat Valuable." The difference between the two alumni could have been attributed to the change of course instructors, and thus, the course curriculum and projects. One alumni took the course under one professor who had taught the course for several years, while the other with a professor who taught the course the very first time. Therefore, the faculty needs to keep this response in mind and revise the course content to either go back to the proceeding methods/assignments, or modify the presentation of content in the newer course curriculum.

There were other statements in the MSIT Alumni Survey that did not receive positive ratings. One person did not find the *IT 662 - Networks in Education* course to be that valuable, but plans have been

made to inactivate this course in the future. Hardware troubleshooting and set-up are really no longer necessary for IT professions, because today purchasing new equipment is cheaper than fixing old technology. In addition, the technology hardware used for the course was outdated, and thus, not reflecting today's environment. Further, networking has evolved into cloud computing that most IT professionals use today, and this topic could be covered in other courses. On the statement that asked alumni their thoughts about the quality of equipment and facilities (learning environment), one indicated average. This alumni also left written comments about improvements to the program as "Add more cutting edge technology into the curriculum." As a result, this area needs to be examined more thoroughly, although budgeting and leadership are problems that the program is currently facing. Further, if this program goes completely online, learning environments and technology hardware may not be issues any longer.

## Annual Report Section Responses

### **Program Summary**

This is the second year of transition between the old and new, as the faculty relocated into the *Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education* department. Roadblocks and bumps still exist as the faculty is still trying to fit in. In addition, the college Dean wants the faculty to focus more on pre-service teacher education and become a technology leader for K12 education in Mississippi. However, this has been a daunting task as faculty are trying to maintain quality of its programs in instructional technology, while at the same time serve and advise the pre-service teacher education program.

Nevertheless, in the transitional state the program has made some progress. First, faculty members in the graduate program have had successful accomplishments. Dr. Shuyan Wang continues to serve on the *Society of International Chinese in Educational Technology* as conference chair and continues to publish. Dr. Taralynn Hartsell has successfully acquired a grant from NASA and is currently working with the INFINITY Science Center to acquire more grants to help promote STEM education. Dr. Jon Beedle has worked hard in trying to get the computer labs organized for the program and has recently published a book chapter.

Most of the highlights have been made from alumnus of the instructional technology program. Alumni have located prominent IT positions such as Directing the Learning Enhancement Center at Southern Miss with others serving as the Instructional Technologist, BlackBoard Administrator, and Project Manager in the Learning Enhancement Center. In addition, one alumni works as the technology coordinator for the Forrest County School District, one as the Coordinator of Electronic and Distance Learning at Pearl River Community College, and one as the Computer and Pre-Employment Trainer at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. Two alumni are currently pursuing their doctoral degrees in Georgia and Virginia. These highlights demonstrate the quality of graduates emanating from this master's program.

One of the major issues (and will be for some time) in the Master's of Science of Instructional Technology (MSIT) program is the recruitment of qualified students. However, this past year we had a larger number of individuals applying for the master's program, as compared to the Ph.D. (reversal of occurrence). This could be attributed to the booth that the College of Education & Psychology had at the Mississippi Educational Computing Association conference in February, 2013 and advertising that faculty members themselves have made at conferences they attended. The numbers of interested individuals in the master's program has picked-up this past year and we hope this continues, especially after program revisions have been approved for online delivery and reduced number of hours.

### **Continuous Improvement Initiatives/Additional Action Plans**

Faculty members have noticed that some people who inquire into the MSIT program have often asked whether this program could be completed on the Gulf Coast. The department chair has been making some plans of moving the older computers to a place on the Coast to establish a working computer lab for education students. But, this plan is still in fruition. Other concerns need to be worked out before such a task can be completed (e.g., facilities, staff, software upgrades/licenses). However, with the impending plans of revising the program plan of study so that students could choose to take all courses online, this issue about availability on the Coast will become irrelevant.

With plans of offering the program online, military personnel should be considered as a new targeted audience. Plans are made to contact the USM education representative on the Keesler Air Force base to promote the MSIT program. There was interest in the MSIT program a few years back when we had a coastal faculty representative from the technology education department. But, since the faculty member left her position and the program was not offered completely online, this targeted audience disappeared. Now, with the new plans of revising the program, recruitment of military personnel needs to be initiated beginning fall.

Another possible target audience could be a joint-program effort with Chinese universities. One IT faculty member is working with the College Dean and Provost to establish a relationship between USM and certain universities in China. The individuals involved hope that a joint-degree program could be worked out in that graduate/undergraduate students from China could obtain degrees from USM and their Chinese institutions. Instructional technology is one of the targeted programs to be used as a pilot. The Provost's office, IT faculty member, and others involved are traveling to China this summer to see if such a relationship could be established.

Necessary revisions will always be needed to streamline the current IT courses to make certain that replication is non-existent and that course content is current and up-to-date (especially in regards to the responses made in the MSIT Alumni Survey). Streamlining of courses has been improved this past year with the efforts of the faculty members, but duplication of content will be a continuous issue to consider. Funding and personnel are also issues that the program is facing in its transition between departments.

### **Closing the Loop/Action Plan Tracking**

The labs/facilities action plan has been closed until further progress can be made. With the transition from the old department to the new, modifications, updates, etc. to existing computer facilities is still in motion. At the moment, funding and planning for updating the labs have come to a halt until the faculty creates a technology plan for future integration of technology in teaching and learning, especially as they are applied to teacher education.

Changing the requirements of the capstone and program plan of study is still active for next year. Because the new program plan of study being planned will not include the capstone requirement, more focus and attention needs to be given toward the comprehension examinations, as well as how to deliver a high-quality program that may be completely online.