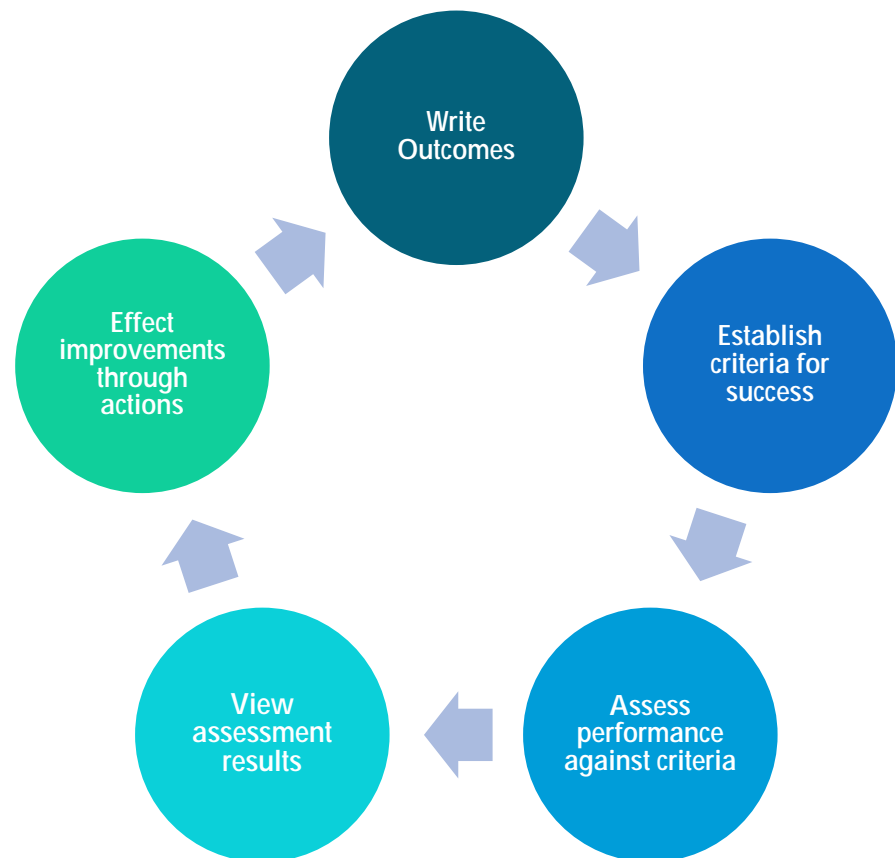


ASSESSMENT SHOWCASE



Spring 2010

Academic Program Assessment

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

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 SACS 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.
UAC Approved 9.30.09

- B. Certificate Programs – IHL maintains the official inventory of USM certificate programs (<http://www.mississippi.edu/research/stats.html>). To be in compliance with SACS policy, all certificate programs in this inventory must assess program-level student learning outcomes in accordance with the Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines.
UAC Approved 9.30.09

- C. Emphasis Areas –

UAC Approved

Assessment Process Overview

SPRING 2010

2008-2009/2009-2010 Academic Program Assessment Plans are in place.

An assessment plan includes:

New Annual Reporting Guidelines

In order to target only needed information and reduce redundancy, the University Assessment Committee (UAC) voted to revise and reduce the number of Annual Reporting fields required in the Academic Program Assessment Report. The 2009-2010 Assessment Report includes the following Annual Reporting data elements:

f PROGRAM SUMMARY

f ADDITIONAL ACTION PLANS/CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

f

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.

Examples of frameworks include:

- Bloom, 1956 (Bloom's taxonomy) - 3 domains of learning: cognitive, affective, & psychomotor
- Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001 - a recent update to Bloom's taxonomy
- Costa & Kallick, 2000 – "habits of mind"
- Marzano, Pickering, & McTighe, 1993 – "thinking skills"

(Suskie, 118)

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:
 - f* Application – capacity to use knowledge and understanding in a new context
 - f* Analysis – ability to identify elements, relationships, and principles of a complex process
 - f* Evaluation, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making Skills – skills in making informed judgments
 - f* Synthesis – capacity to put together what one has learned in a new, original way
 - f* Creativity – abilities to be flexible, take intellectual risks, and be open-minded to new ideas
 - f* Critical Thinking – capacities to seek truth, clarity, and accuracy; distinguish facts from opinions
 - f* Information Literacy – broad set of skills reflecting today's reality of research practice
 - f* Performance Skills – physical skills
 - f* 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)

2010 Showcase

HOTEL, RESTAURANT, AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT (HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT) BS

2010-2011 Program-level Student Learning Outcomes

Outcome 1:

Conceptual Knowledge Outcome - Students will define important business and tourism industry terminologies, acronyms, and concepts, and be able to use and apply them in appropriate industry contexts.

Outcome 2:

Ethical Behavioral Outcome - Students will demonstrate values, attitudes, and behaviors that reflect cultural sensitivity, professional ethics, and social responsibility required in the service industry environment.

Outcome 3:

Oral Business Communication Outcome - Students completing the degree will possess the ability to organize and present precise and clear verbal instructions, deliver verbal reports and demonstrate effective oral communication skills traditionally required of managers in tourism organizations and within traditional business and service environments.

Outcome 4:

Written Business Communication Outcome - Students completing the program will possess the ability to produce well-constructed written business communications such as reports and documents (including electronic) traditionally found in tourism organizations at managerial levels.

Outcome 5:

Technological, Administrative and Managerial Skills Outcome - Students completing the program will demonstrate the requisite level of information and communication technology skills such as the use of office productivity tools, data analytic tools, and the internet. They will also develop administrative skills such as time management and multi-tasking.

Outcome 6:

Critical and Creative Thinking Outcome - Students completing the program will demonstrate the ability to generate something fundamentally new out of their creative thinking process or put the existing elements together in a new system, format, or structure to improve upon what already exists.

2010 Showcase

COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES (HEALTH PROMOTION) BS

Program-level Direct Measure

Measure: Methods Assignment

In CHS 408, students will describe educational methods, identify appropriate use of methods, and give step-by-step instructions for using methods.

Achievement Target:

80% of students will score 4 or 5 on a five point rubric scale for items (1) description and use of method clearly explained, (2) clearly identifies appropriate situation for use of method, and (3) provides a step-by-step procedure for using method.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Met

Fall 2008 - Course not offered. Spring 2009 - 81.8% of students scored 4 or 5 on a five point rubric scale for et3(of)-1rr-2(

INTERIOR DESIGN BS

Program-level Direct Measure

Measure: Internship Mentor Evaluation

ID 442 Internship students are evaluated using a program-designed rubric by the professional employer/mentor to assess the student's 1) professional design knowledge, 2) computer knowledge, 3) client interaction, 4) dependability, 5) initiative and 6) attitude. Assessment by the mentor will be restricted to observations while the student is participating in a required structured professional internship with the firm.

Achievement Target:

85% of internship students will earn a total mean score of 3.8/5 or higher in each category on an evaluation completed by the professional mentor (internship host).

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Met

Summer 09: N=16

(100%) 16/16 earned a minimum total mean score of 3.8/5 in Professional Design Knowledge

(100%) 16/16 earned a minimum total mean score of 3.8/5 in Computer Knowledge

(94%) 15/16 earned a minimum total mean score of 3.8/5 in Client Interaction

(94%) 15/16 earned a minimum total mean score of 3.8/5 in Dependability

(88%) 14/16 earned a minimum total mean score of 3.8/5 in Initiative

(94%) 15/16 earned a minimum total mean score of 3.8/5 in Attitude

COMMUNICATION (SPEECH COMMUNICATION) MA/MS

Program-level Direct Measure

Measure: Comprehensive Essay Exam

Students will take a comprehensive essay exam after completing required coursework for the master's degree. This exam will contain one or more questions that pertain to the learning objectives 1-4. The exam will be read by a two-person examination committee and rated on a form containing a specific criterion for knowledge of the field; critical reasoning; ability to understand and conduct research; and, ability to apply and utilize research and theory. Once a year, the department's examination committee (2 graduate faculty and chair who design and evaluate all masters comprehensive exams) will meet to discuss the performance of all students on the exam during the past year. Assessment of the program and recommendations will be made based on student answers. Results of this assessment by the examination committee will be presented to the faculty and the need for programmatic

PSYCHOLOGY BA/BS

Program-level Indirect Measure

Measure: Alumni Survey-Career Development

Alumni respond to an Alumni Survey that uses a 1-7 Likert scale to measure degree of agreement with statements regarding each of the department's outcomes.

Achievement Target:

70% of alumni will agree "strongly" or "somewhat" that the quality of training, with regard to career planning, was adequate.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Not Met

64% of alumni (N=22 reporting) from the Hattiesburg campus, and 20% of the alumni (N=10 reporting) from the Gulf Coast campus, reported being satisfied with the quality of training with regard to career development in psychology.

PARALEGAL STUDIES BA

Program-level Indirect Measure

Measure: Graduate Exit Survey - Resolving Ethical Dilemmas

Graduating seniors will evaluate on a graduate exit survey the ability to identify and resolve ethical dilemmas that arise in the legal workplace on a 5 point scale with 1 as strongly agree and 5 as strongly disagree.

Achievement Target:

80% of graduating seniors will strongly agree or agree on a graduate exit survey that their education experience in the paralegal program at USM has given them the ability to identify and resolve ethical dilemmas that may be confronted in workplace.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Met

100% of the students enrolled in PLS 490 mini-session for Fall 2008 (12/12) on the Hattiesburg campus strongly agreed or agreed on a graduate exit survey that their education experience in the paralegal program at USM has given them the ability to identify and resolve ethical dilemmas that may be confronted in workplace. For the Gulf Coast for Fall 2008, the instructor failed to give the students the graduate exit survey, thus there is no data available. No Spring 2009 data was collected as the PLS 490 capstone course was not offered in Hattiesburg or on the Gulf Coast campus.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY (MS)

Program-level Indirect Measure

Measure: Advanced Graduate Studies

Students seeking advanced graduate degrees will be accepted into advanced graduate degree programs.

Achievement Target:

80% of all students applying to advanced graduate degree programs will be accepted.

Findings (2008-2009) - Achievement Target: Met

100% of the students (n=2) that applied for advanced graduate study were accepted the schools of their choosing.

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, 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, 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.

2010 Showcase

PSYCHOLOGY PHD

Program-level Action Plans

Focus on Training Students for Academia

Increase projects requiring research databases and analysis

In the assessment report for the 2007-2008 academic year, the assessment team recommended adding a case research requirement in Acc 325 so that changes in the students' abilities could be evaluated longitudinally during their undergraduate career (i.e., from Acc 325 through Acc 327 and finally in Acc 401) to determine if their research skills improved significantly during the program. Indeed, the 2008-2009 results indicate the students' abilities to research databases and draw proper conclusions based on their research appeared to improve dramatically in the sequence of financial accounting courses as a large portion of the students performed at an unsatisfactory level in Acc 325, but by the final case in Acc 401 the vast majority of students performed at an acceptable level. Based on these results, the assessment team recommends that the current structure of case assignments in the financial accounting sequence of courses be continued in the future with proper assessment to ensure this learning objective continues to be met. Results from the assessment rubric applied to the case in Acc 407 in the 2008-2009 academic year, however, suggest improvements are needed in researching the governmental accounting standards. Almost half the students in Acc 407 performed at a low level on the research case in this course. In the prior year (i.e., 2007-2008), students solved three research cases in Acc 407, but this was cut back to one assignment in 2008-2009 because the assessment team recommended additional cases be added to Acc 401 to ensure that students were exposed to a series of cases over sequenced courses (i.e., Acc 325, 327, and 401). In the prior year, with three case assignments in Acc 407, students performed well overall on their third and final case in this course. However, in 2008-2009, the Acc 407 students had less exposure to researching GASB standards since only one case was assigned; this likely resulted in their poor performance on the assessment rubric this year. The assessment team recommends increasing the number of research case assignments in Acc 407 to three, with assessment evaluation to occur on the third case. This will give Acc 407 students more exposure to researching GASB standards, which should improve their skills in this area. The current assessment procedures measure the ability of students to research the professional standards, which is important. However, the assessment team believes students' research skills should be broadened to include the ability to research databases containing empirical (i.e., financial) data and the ability to download selected data from these databases for analysis. The assessment team recommends that in one or more senior level accounting courses a project be added requiring students to access the Compustat database and import financial data into an Excel spreadsheet for appropriate analysis. The project should be included as part of the course grade and evaluated for assessment purposes as well.

Priority: High **Target Date:** Beginning Fall semester 2009

Responsible Person/Group: Accounting faculty teaching at/above 300 level, Assessment team, Director

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DANCE (PERFORMANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY) (BS)

2010 Showcase

ANNUAL REPORTING

EDUCATION (SPECIAL EDUCATION) PHD

Executive Summary

In 2008-2009, there have been 10 Special Education Ph.D. candidates at various stages of the program. After two years of research and discussion of the CISE doctoral programs, CISE graduate faculty made the decision to eliminate the Ed.D. programs and revise and enhance the Ph.D. programs. Graduate faculty met in curriculum emphasis areas to review program plans to ensure that programmatic outcomes and assessments were included des2-7(i TD[t)-

MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY BS

Teaching Activities

Introduction to Medical Technology (MTC 101) is in preparation for on-line delivery in spring, 2010.
Several Special Problems (MTC 492) courses were completed, including courses that will lead to completion of

Recommended Reading

General Assessment Resources

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 & Robert M. 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