

Departmental and Program Assessment Annual Assessment Plan Report

Academic Year: 2009-10 Chair: John Sanders

Academic Department, Program, General Education Unit:

Student Assessment Plan (SAP) – Basic Check-list – If your answers are “yes” a question in this section, no further explanation is necessary.

1. Is there a current assessment plan for your department, program, or general education component? Current implies that the department uses this SAP. It does not have to be rewritten unless your assessment plan has changed. It should be on the web at <http://www.hendrix.edu/academics/academics.aspx?id=7264>.

We updated our previous plan to reflect the new courses. Also, we just completed our ten-year assessment and are waiting for the report from our consultant.

If no, provide a timeline that will produce a plan by the end of the next academic year.

2. Does the current SAP include student learning goals?

Departmental/programmatic/general education component student learning goals should be able to stand alone as a list without pages of explanatory commentary.

yes

If no, provide a timeline that will produce student learning goals by the end of the next academic year.

3. Does your SAP include a list of assessment data collected yearly? Assessment data lists should be able to stand alone without pages of explanatory commentary. Additionally, collected data should be of enough value to the department that it is read yearly. If not, it is probably not of sufficient use to collect.

yes

If no, provide a timeline that will produce an assessment data list by the end of the next academic year.

4. Are student learning goals available to students on the web on the departmental/programmatic page(s)?

No. In the fall of 2011 I have the building secretary add them to the departmental website.

If no, provide a timeline that will produce student access to the learning goals by the end of the next academic year.

5. Are student learning goals, appropriate for each course, included in the course syllabi in your department or program?

Yes. However, these are not directly correlated to the departmental learning goals. On some syllabi the learning goals of the college are the ones which are referenced.

If no, provide a timeline that will produce student learning goals by the end of the next academic year.

6. Does your SAP include direct assessments? “Direct” refers to evaluated student work.

Yes. At present we only compile the senior theses.

no

If no, provide a timeline that will produce a direct student assessment tool by the end of the next academic year.

7. Describe which indirect assessments in your assessment plan have been collected for the year and which have not. “Indirect” refers to student surveys, interviews, or opinions.
Yes. During the 2010-2011 academic year we held several discussions with our majors and minors in order to solicit their input on our program and courses. This was to follow up the extensive survey completed during the previous academic year. In May, we met with our seniors for two hours to solicit their feedback primarily on the senior thesis but also their comments on anything pertaining to our requirements.

If no, provide a timeline that will produce an indirect student assessment tool by the end of the next academic year.

Student Assessment Plan Development - Departments and programs who have a complete and current SAP should consider the next step in SAP development. *This could easily be the annual action item for your department or program (next section #5).*

1. As a next step in SAP development, departments/programs are encouraged begin working on an assessment audit to determine how student learning goals fit across the courses in the major. This could be as complicated as a full grid of student learning goals, or a single learning goal, across the courses in the major. (This has not been required of departments, but it is a recommended next step when the SAP is up to date.)

Yes. For the ten-year report we correlated departmental courses which we felt specifically targeted one or more of the departmental learning goals. However, we did not line up every course offered with a specific learning goal since some courses do not target a specific goal but, instead, attempt to address several of the goals.

If yes, please provide the results in either in prose or as a table.

Yearly Assessment Report – each department or program is expected to have assessment discussions for at least two hours each academic year. **Help is available from David Sutherland, just call or email.**

1. What was your planned action item identified in your last report?

None was specified. We did not focus on a specific assessment item this past year since we were working on the ten-year assessment report.

2. Briefly summarize the topics discussed in your annual assessment meeting. (If you have not met this year, why not and when do you plan to meet?)

At our May meeting we concentrated on the changes made this past year in our senior thesis capstone course (497). Dr. Williamson made a number of changes which we believe improved the quality of the work done by the students. We discussed measures intended to improve them even more. In particular, we need to find ways of getting the students to begin their research sooner. We discussed our attempts to “scaffold” into courses types of assignments which prepare students for the kinds of research and writing required for the thesis. We also discussed our disagreements as to what a “thesis” should entail. The

members of the department have not yet been able to find consensus on the issue. Finally, we talked about the student feedback on our required Theories and Research course (395) which has been negative for the past few years.

3. What was the conclusion of your assessment discussion and how did the collected assessment data inform your conclusion? Specifically describe any curricular or programmatic changes that have been made that were based, at least in part, on the data in your SAP.

At this point we have not made any programmatic changes to the courses discussed. The members of the department agreed to go one more year before assessing both the Theories and Research and Senior Thesis requirements. In May of 2012 we will make decisions about what to do these requirements.

4. What are the plans for improving student learning in your unit?

In addition to our planned discussions on 395 & 497 we need to address our distribution categories for the major since concerns about the groupings have been raised by members of the department. Also, we plan to discuss the report by our consultant.

5. Define at least one new action item for your unit that will be a goal of your assessment discussions next year?

We will focus on both 395 and 497.

(This action item could be to work on the SAP or on the assessment audit to correlate student learning goals with specific courses, described above. It can (and perhaps should) be a very limited item.)