

**Departmental and Program Assessment  
Annual Assessment Plan Report**

Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_2011-2012\_\_\_\_\_

Academic Unit: \_\_\_\_\_Film Studies\_\_\_\_\_

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_Kristi McKim\_\_\_\_\_

**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 this SAP is used by the department. 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>.

yes    no   *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    no   *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    no   *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)?

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

We have talked with students and graduates as to their experiences in the program and their hopes for future program development (curricular and extra-curricular).

**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  no *If yes, please provide the results in either in prose or as a table.*

Given that Film Studies offers an interdisciplinary minor (and Film Studies as part of the ENGF major is assessed within the English department) staffed by affiliated faculty with no departmental/programmatic home in Film Studies, we cannot expect that certain of our many courses that count toward the minor will be offered with regularity and consistency enough to mandate any *required* courses, beyond ENGF 269, Introduction to Film Studies. For this reason, we in Film Studies appreciate the flexibility and openness of our six-course minor curriculum, such that students can carve out their own individual course of Film Study as pertains to their particular interest.

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

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

We will coordinate our student learning goals with our specific courses, and—in so doing—consider whether our learning goals best reflect our program needs and offerings.

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?)

We have convened as a group through email and in smaller conversations (1-3 affiliated faculty) less formally during the spring semester. We have discussed student performance and satisfaction in the minor and in the ENGF major. We also have discussed the aforementioned challenge to establish an assessment audit given the variability and irregularity of Film Studies courses. We devoted most of our time to discussing Breadth and Depth of Film Studies per the Mellon Grant, which involved two major events: 1) Professor Rashna Richards (Film Studies, Rhodes College) visited campus to give a scholarly lecture, attend class, and meet with Film Studies faculty regarding comparative Film Studies issues at Rhodes/Hendrix and possible collaboration between Hendrix and Rhodes (both of which have small programs with only one faculty member with an explicit Film Studies home) for an annual student colloquium, and 2) McKim's April trip to the Five College Consortium (Hampshire, Amherst, Smith, UMass-Amherst, and Mount Holyoke), which involved extensive visiting of Amherst's Film Studies courses, meeting with affiliated faculty and chairs at other colleges, and discussion of how one begins to *grow* a Film Studies program within a liberal arts environment.

We also spent a great deal of time working through the unfortunate news of the Hendrix-Murphy Program's shifted funding priorities, which means that Hendrix Film Studies needs to find a new source of support if we are to continue the ongoing and successful film series, film lectures, trips to film festivals, etc. that have thus far defined the co-curricular Film Studies experience at Hendrix. Earlier in the 2011-12 academic year, we were invited to apply for a three-year Murphy grant that would sustain the Film Studies program/the English-Film major in ways comparable to the English-Literary Studies and English-Creative Writing tracks of the English major, and we remain disappointed that our ENGF/FILM students won't have the option to enjoy Hendrix-Murphy programmatic support of Film Studies. This lack of resources constitutes perhaps our greatest concern at this point, as it threatens students' and faculty members' ability to engage this dynamic medium of film beyond the classroom.

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.

One of our two graduating ENGF majors earned a full scholarship and generous stipend to Harvard's Ph.D. program in Film Studies (among several other top-notch graduate programs), and we're incredibly proud of this student's accomplishment, particularly as Hendrix's ENGF major is only two years old. Though ENGF differs from FILM (the former, a major housed in English; the latter, a minor), the fact that this exceptional student gained admission to a *film* department with the ENGF major speaks well to the Film Studies integrity of this major. This student speaks very highly of Film Studies at Hendrix, and we appreciate this generous feedback as we craft and build our program.

In the spirit of expanding our curriculum, we added a 300-level ENGF course *Film History* to the curriculum, which complements our present offerings in theory and aesthetics. Students have asked for more dedicated courses to film history and methodology, and this course will help to synthesize student learning about theory and formalist aspects of film with film history.

Collected assessment data, particularly indirect assessments, determine that students want *more*—more options, more events, more involvement, more courses, more faculty—of their Film Studies experience at Hendrix. We're gratified and appreciative of the fact that course evaluations and informal interviews suggest that our current offerings and programming has been successful to the point that student enthusiasm runs higher than we have resources (personnel, budgetary) to support this interest, and we want to work hard to sustain this enthusiasm and dedication with our limited means. We remain aware, however, that the aforementioned restrictions on our resources challenge our ability to enrich and sustain student enthusiasm beyond the classroom. It falls to us as professors, then, more than ever, to make the classroom experience as stimulating, substantive, and thought-provoking as possible, given that students—at least in the near future—won't have opportunity for film festival travel, on-campus film festivals, or visiting film lectures. As faculty, we have brainstormed possible alternative funding venues; in the past we didn't apply for Odyssey funding for film-related events/travel (as Murphy covered these costs), but now we will pursue Odyssey support for such opportunities. Likewise, we met with development officers about our Film Studies program needs, with hopes that perhaps a new or existing donor might appreciate and choose to support the passion and productivity of Hendrix Film Studies. We also have discussed the possibility of writing ACS grants with fellow institutions (e.g. Rashna Richards' Film Studies program at Rhodes, as mentioned above); Professor Richards is very willing and interested to participate.

4. What are the plans for improving student learning in your unit?
  - We will work to sustain what seems already to work: paper assignments, student presentations, variety of films from national/historical/generic periods within courses, etc.
  - We will work to mentor students as they pursue graduate school, internships, and Odyssey experiences related to film.
  - We will work to find funding for extra- and co-curricular experiences that unquestionably enhance and enrich the community not only of Film Studies minors/ENGF majors but also of the campus at large (film screenings always were packed, often standing-room only, with students and community members who weren't studying film).
  - With our remaining funds from the Mellon Breadth and Depth Film Studies grant, we will continue to have discussions about what faculty and students want and can manage with regard to program growth and development.
5. Define at least one new action item for your unit that will be a goal of your assessment discussions next year?  
(*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.*)

Despite the aforementioned challenges of finding and maintaining program integrity within an interdisciplinary curriculum (with only one full-time Film Studies faculty member), we will work to establish a clearer sense of how the courses that count toward the minor fulfill our learning goals.