

Date: 18 May 2018
To: Assessment Committee
From: Rebecca Resinski
Re: Classics program assessment

The four faculty in the Classics program—Chris Campolo, Peg Falls-Corbitt, Stan Rauh, and Rebecca Resinski—convened on Tuesday 5/1 for their annual assessment meeting.

The status of Classics as an interdisciplinary program

I would like to highlight upfront that, since 2012, Classics has been formally classified and bureaucratically run as an interdisciplinary program. The letter we recently received from the Assessment Committee states that it sees the program as one “within the Department of Languages,” but that is a significant misunderstanding. Although Drs. Rauh and Resinski are housed in the Languages department, Drs. Campolo and Falls-Corbitt—members of the Philosophy department—also teach in the program, and Classics is organized and administered in a way that is parallel to other interdisciplinary programs with majors on campus. Just as the Assessment Committee doesn’t treat Neuroscience as a program “within” the Philosophy department it shouldn’t treat Classics as a program “within” the Languages department.

I’ve asked in the past (multiple times over the years) for the assessment webpage to reflect this reality so that Classics is not listed under “Foreign Languages” but is instead included with the other interdisciplinary programs (BCMB, Environmental Science, and Neuroscience). Seeing us as program wholly internal to the Languages department and analogous to its spoken language programs misrecognizes the discipline of Classics, the way Classics is run at Hendrix, and the contributions of Drs. Campolo and Falls-Corbitt to the program. I hope that the webpage—and the Assessment Committee’s understanding of Classics at Hendrix—can be revised accordingly.

Narrative of our “strength”

As requested, here is a narrative of our “strength” as identified by Assessment Committee—that is, our mapping of learning goals to the Classics curriculum and VSLG as well our plan of assessing different learning goals each year:

Throughout 2012-2013 members of the Classics program met multiple times to write and refine a list of learning goals for the program. We based these goals on our knowledge of the field and of the Hendrix Classics curriculum. After finalizing the list, we considered which courses were especially geared to particular goals. Because some courses may be taught by different professors in different semesters, we erred on the side of caution and identified goals that would be worked toward in a particular course no matter which professor happened to be teaching it. We also decided that each year we would focus on a different goal (or set of related goals) to assess; this would ensure that each goal and our practices related to students’ achievement of it would receive attention

moving forward. The work we had done coordinating our learning goals with our curriculum made it easy to map our program's learning goals onto the VSLG in 2016-2017.

Plans for improvement next year

Our assessment plan for next year is two-fold:

- We will look at the way in which the capstone course (Latin 410) provides evidence of student achievement of our learning goals. We would like to note, however, that our capstone course isn't the best barometer of the program's overall effectiveness in student achievement of learning goals, since the number of students we teach in the Classics program far exceeds the number of our majors. Although assessment of our capstone course can provide us with useful information, our ongoing practice of assessing different goals throughout the courses in the Classics program is a better way for us to see how the program overall helps students to meet its learning goals.

- All of our assessment discussions and decisions are based on direct evidence of student performance, but some of our evidence is in the form of case studies rather than traditional quantitative data. We will look at our internal evidence-reporting form to ensure that it can accommodate different learning goals and different kinds of evidence.

Attached

I've attached an updated SAP as a separate document.