Assessment Report, 2019-2020
Classics Interdisciplinary Program

The Annual Assessment Meeting took place on May 11, 2020. Our tasks included reviewing the Student Assessment Plan, reviewing and updating the appendices to this plan, and discussing the scheduled learning goal for this academic year in hopes of making improvements in student learning.

The core document for the Student Assessment Plan, in light of feedback from the Office of Assessment, required only minor changes at this time. These changes included:

1) SAP now includes direct measures for assessment at the program level for each learning goal
2) the annual assessment plan was modified so that each learning goal is assessed on a 5-year cycle.

The SAP now has two additional files that will serve as appendices. The first appendix is a Master Rubric that lists each learning goal and provides more specific criteria for evaluating students who qualify as either high achieving, competent, needing improvement, or unsatisfactory. The second appendix is the form used for the process of evaluating learning goals in courses. For each course, the instructor simply maps the learning goal and specific criteria onto this appendix and enters the relevant information for student data and tools/exercises used to determine this data. Finally, the instructor uses this second appendix for reflection and commentary prior to annual assessment meetings.

For our annual review, the Classics program assessed learning goal #7. According to this goal, the Classics program aims to enable students "to develop skill at analyzing and/or synthesizing evidence from a variety of genres or media." I would note before proceeding that the first discussion item and action was changing the wording of this learning goal, due to possible ambiguities in reading and difficulties in creating specific rubric criteria. The language now reads "to analyze and synthesize a variety of evidence types." This wording may still need to be revisited in the future. It enabled us, however, to take further action in completing the Master Rubric mentioned above.

At this point, we shared our collected data for the year. Our tools were under-developed for this year and particularly for this goal, so our data is rather general in nature. This, naturally, was impetus to the actions mentioned in the previous paragraphs. The summary of collected data, however, reads:

High Achieving   21% of Students
Competent   37% of Students
Needs Improvement   24% of Students
Unsatisfactory   18% of Students

Upon discussing our results and experiences, we also formed a few other conclusions beyond the need for better tools in the SAP. Our interpretation of student learning in this area was likely largely colored by our own problematic readings of the learning goal, which also caused problems with designs for exercises intending to foster the achievement of this goal. Therefore, we need to be more deliberate in creating exercises at appropriate intervals through the term to measure student progress in direct terms. This learning goal has often been integrated into lectures, therefore leading to passive consumption by students. A more thoughtful approach by instructors, which includes homework exercises designed with this goal specifically in mind, will help students better achieve this goal in future courses.