University of Alabama

Detailed Assessment Report
2013-2014 American Studies M.A.
As of: 7/14/2014 01:02 PM CENTRAL

Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers

For Academic Programs
Informed by your assessment activities related to student learning, what changes have you made in your degree program in the last three to five years? Describe the changes (e.g., curriculum revision, new courses, faculty development), the general results that prompted the changes (e.g., student performance on an assessment measure), and any impact on student learning that you might attribute to these changes.

The Department of American Studies encourages the deep and broad study of all facets of the complex and dynamic cultures of the United States. Its academic mission in support of a wide range of academic interests and capacities among its constituents is to encourage the development of strong critical thinking skills. As students encounter various facets of American culture and analyze them, they gain a stronger awareness of those features of American cultural, political, artistic, and social history and a stronger capacity to analyze all complex information in all programs of study and disciplines.

The departmental assessment efforts follow the statement above by measuring how well our students perform on writing, thinking, and collaboration tasks that require strong critical thinking. For Master's students, AMS measures their performance on the core skills necessary for strong development of critical thinking in the Humanities and Social Sciences at the graduate level. Whereas, AMS Master's students have successfully demonstrated consistently strong capacity to meet departmental goals via their performance on analytical writing, collaborative thinking, and mastery of methodological training— as indicated by the assessment measures for 2010-2013—the department has decided that the program needs improvement in encouraging more professional development among its graduate students as a result of assessment findings.

A crucial component of professional training for AMS graduate students is participation in the scholarly community beyond the classroom. AMS desires for its graduate students to engage in scholarly activities, in particular, presentation of papers at scholarly conferences and submission of essays to scholarly journals. AMS is trying to implement a more effective process wherein students will be held accountable for such submissions. Such an effort faces two challenges that we have yet to resolve. First, the challenges of the calendar in that finding suitable conferences at which students participate may or may not be workable with the academic calendar; and, second, the challenges of providing adequate funding in support of such travel present practical challenges to such efforts.

To address the problems—which was first identified and targeted in 2012—the department began to encourage more direct participation in conference participation in its graduate student colloquium course work during 2012-13. Previously, such participation was assumed rather than encouraged via specific suggestions from instructors. This was a modest change. It did not produce a significant change. The department recognizes that it must address funding issues in concert with efforts to encourage more participation and that students professional development as measured by conference participation cannot be improved without funding support. AMS graduate students have a specified two-year program, and the department is gathering assessment data on this issue so that it may consider changes needed to support more professional activity among its graduate students. AMS began gathering such data for assessment in 2013-2014 and will analyze those results and compare to data for the upcoming 2014-2015 year, which will measure a new group of students. Having anecdotal data from previous M.A. classes and then assessment data from the two classes beginning in 2013 will provide guidance for the department to reconsider the place of professional activity for its students in this ongoing effort.

AMS will continue to incorporate more direct measures designed to encourage more aggressive efforts by graduate students to attend and contribute to academic conferences as part of their graduate programs, but we have yet to require such participation and will not do so until we can find secure and adequate funding for such travel.

Mission / Purpose
The Department of American Studies supports the liberal arts mission of the University of Alabama by providing quality general education courses and programs of study leading to the Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Arts degrees in American Studies. The Department promotes knowledge and understanding of American life through scholarly research and is committed to offering teaching and scholarship of the highest quality, which explores the ongoing dialogue about America as a nation and an idea. We strive to contribute to the quality of intellectual life on the campus, in Tuscaloosa, across the state and region, and through American Studies professional associations. We seek to provide students with scholarly opportunities to explore how they are shaped by American culture, as well as how they can shape that culture. A special component of the department's mission is to advance the study and understanding of gender, race, class, and region throughout the curriculum. We also seek to explore the many ways in which the term 'American' does not limit itself to the geographical boundaries of the United States, but expands to include transnational connections.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Developing Complex Synthetic Writing Skills
Students will demonstrate skills in presenting written arguments supported by research and synthetic thinking. Instructors will evaluate student learning by assessing student performance.

Connected Document
American Studies MA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

**Standard Associations**

**SACS 3.3.1**
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**

6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts
11 Writing - SLO is related to building on students' competency in academic writing skills and aims to extend those skills

**Strategic Plan Associations**

University of Alabama
1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
3.14 Provide career preparation and employment services that lead graduates to satisfying and productive careers and professions.

**Related Measures**

**M 1: Scholarly Papers**
Students will identify topics and then conduct research, and write an article-length scholarly paper to be assessed by two faculty members in AMS 596 who will calculate percent of students whose performance is judged to be satisfactory or outstanding.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**
AMS asserts a target of 90% of students completing a essay worthy of presentation at a scholarly conference and with potential for expansion into a full-length article.

**M 2: Scholarly Submissions**
Students will be encouraged to submit the scholarly articles they write in Colloquium to appropriate scholarly conferences. Faculty members will calculate percent of students who submit scholarly articles.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**
AMS is hesitant to assert a specific target for student submissions for scholarly presentations or publications. The timing of academic publications in the Humanities and Social Sciences is often beyond the reasonable expectations regarding measuring success while the student remains in the program. Moreover, availability of conference outlets for students may vary every year and be influenced by topics. However, AMS strongly encourages students to engage in such efforts and will continue to do so while also trying to develop a helpful and functional target to help measure student learning success of synthetic writing skills with this measure.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**
For full information, see the Details of Action Plans section of this report.

**Improving Data Gathering of Scholarly Submissions**
Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
AMS faculty will seek options for better gathering of information or adjust how the department incorporates the scholarly subm... 

**M 3: Synthetic Writing and Cultural Complexity**
Students will demonstrate understanding of essential methodologies and cultural artifacts in relationship to the complexity and diversity of American culture with researched oral presentations.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**
AMS asserts a target that 90% of students achieve an 80% or higher on oral presentations as evaluated and averaged by faculty members.

**M 5: Research Proposals**
The Chair will track the number of graduate student research proposals accepted for presentation at scholarly conferences. Graduate instructors will encourage and support graduate student efforts to present research at scholarly conferences.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**
The Chair and Graduate Director will monitor the efforts of graduate students to submit papers for scholarly presentation and publication and their success rate as a measure of mastery of complex synthetic thinking skills. AMS has yet to establish a specific target but strongly encourages students to participate in this professional development.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**
For full information, see the Details of Action Plans section of this report.

**Improving M.A. student success at scholarly submissions**
Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
AMS seeks to improve student success at scholarly oral presentations and publications as evidence of mastery of synthetic within...

**SLO 2: Understanding the Complexity and Diversity of American Culture**
Students will demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of American culture and its interrelationships with cultural artifacts and to appreciate how and why American culture changes over time through presentation of oral reports and/or essay exams. Instructors will evaluate student success.
**Connected Document**
American Studies MA Curriculum Maps

**Relevant Associations:**
The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

**Standard Associations**

**SACS 3.3.1**
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
3.3.1.4 Research within its educational mission

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

**Strategic Plan Associations**
University of Alabama
3.14 Provide career preparation and employment services that lead graduates to satisfying and productive careers and professions.
4.3 Produce scholars who will become academic and civic leaders in their disciplines.
4.4 Produce graduates who will serve as effective leaders in Alabama's government, businesses, educational systems, health care, the arts, and other professions, and who will be leaders in their communities.

**Related Measures**

**M 3: Synthetic Writing and Cultural Complexity**
Students will demonstrate understanding of essential methodologies and cultural artifacts in relationship to the complexity and diversity of American culture with researched oral presentations.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**
The article-length essay produced in the Colloquium two-semester course sequence by definition requires the demonstration of student learning regarding the complexity and diversity of American culture. Moreover, the content of the course and the steady interaction with the topics of peers reinforces this complexity.

**M 4: Analyzing Interrelationships Between Cultural Artifacts**
Students will demonstrate capacity to identify and analyze interrelationships between various cultural artifacts in course oral presentations. Two faculty members in the Colloquium will evaluate the quality of content and analysis.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

**Target:**
The target for this measure is for 90% of students to achieve a 80% or higher in the average of oral presentations.

**SLO 3: Developing Primary Research Skills**
Students will demonstrate a strong capacity to initiate substantive research projects and conduct ambitious primary research. Instructors will uses research essay assignments to assess this skill. This measure will be employed in the first-year coursework and evaluated by two instructors.

**Relevant Associations:**

**Standard Associations**

**SACS 3.3.1**
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
3.3.1.4 Research within its educational mission

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts
10 Social and Behavioral Sciences - SLO is related to human behavior, social structures or economics
11 Writing - SLO is related to building on students' competency in academic writing skills and aims to extend those skills

**Strategic Plan Associations**
University of Alabama
1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.

**Related Measures**

**M 1: Scholarly Papers**
Students will identify topics and then conduct research, and write an article-length scholarly paper to be assessed by two faculty members in AMS 596 who will calculate percent of students whose performance is judged to be satisfactory or outstanding.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**
AMS asserts that conducting primary research is a definitive part of the work of a graduate student in American Studies and that successful completion of a full-length scholarly essay as stipulated in measure 1 for scholarly papers also by definition measures primary research skills. AMS sets a target of 90% of graduate students to succeed at this task.

**SLO 4: Building Oral Presentation Skills**
Students demonstrate a strong capacity to develop, organize, and present analytical thinking with oral presentations.

**Relevant Associations:**

The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

**Standard Associations**

- SACS 3.3.1
  - 3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**

- 6 Humanities - SLO is related to students’ ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts
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- 11 Writing - SLO is related to building on students’ competency in academic writing skills and aims to extend those skills

**Strategic Plan Associations**

- University of Alabama
  - 1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.

**Related Measures**

**M 5: Research Proposals**

The Chair will track the number of graduate student research proposals accepted for presentation at scholarly conferences. Graduate instructors will encourage and support graduate student efforts to present research at scholarly conferences.

**Source of Evidence:** Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**

The Chair and Graduate Director will monitor the efforts of graduate students to submit papers for scholarly presentation and publication and their success rate as a measure of mastery of complex synthetic thinking skills. AMS has yet to establish a specific target but strongly encourages students to participate in this professional development.

**Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

**OthOtcn 5: Maintaining Recognized High Quality**

The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality.

**Relevant Associations:**

**Standard Associations**

- SACS 3.3.1
  - 3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**

- 6 Humanities - SLO is related to students’ ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

**Strategic Plan Associations**

- University of Alabama
  - 1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
  - 1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.
  - 4.1 Provide leadership in addressing economic, social, and cultural issues in Alabama through research and outreach activities.
  - 4.3 Produce scholars who will become academic and civic leaders in their disciplines.
  - 4.4 Produce graduates who will serve as effective leaders in Alabama's government, businesses, educational systems, health care, the arts, and other professions, and who will be leaders in their communities.
  - 4.5 Develop and reward leadership skills among students, faculty, and staff.
  - 4.8 Emphasize the creation of leaders as a core component of an education at Alabama's flagship university.

**Related Measures**

**M 6: Admission Rate to Ph.D Programs or Professional Employment**

The Chair will track and evaluate the admission rate of M.A. students choosing to apply to PhD programs and those obtaining professional employment.

**Source of Evidence:** Graduate/professional school acceptance rate

**Target:**

AMS sets as a target for successful admission rates to professional Ph.D. or related graduate programs or employment at 80% of M.A. graduates as a measure of the success of the program as maintaining recognized high quality.

**OthOtcn 6: Maintaining Optimal Enrollment Levels**

The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and corresponding degree completions.

**Relevant Associations:**

**Standard Associations**

- SACS 3.3.1
  - 3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

Strategic Plan Associations
University of Alabama
1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.

Related Measures

M 7: Degrees Awarded
Chair will measure number of degrees awarded for the past three years, and compare it to ACHE viability standards.
Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other
Target:
AMS seeks to maintain an optimal level of enrollment for its M.A. program. Based on current graduate faculty availability and limited funding for graduate assistantships, AMS determines that the optimal enrollment is 8-10 graduate students enrolled each year.

M 8: Applications and Admissions
Chair will measure the number of graduate student applications and the number admitted for the past three years.
Source of Evidence: Graduate/professional school acceptance rate
Target:
AMS seeks to maintain an optimal level of enrollment for its M.A. program. Based on current graduate faculty availability and limited funding for graduate assistantships, AMS determines that the optimal enrollment is 8-10 graduate students enrolled each year.

Other OTCM 7: Maintaining High Value Defined by Constituents
The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves.

Relevant Associations:

Standard Associations
SACS 3.3.1
3.3.1.3 Educational support services

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

Strategic Plan Associations
University of Alabama
1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
1.3 Improve communication and increase collaboration among academic and administrative units.
1.4 Align resources to most effectively support academic, scholarship, and research excellence priorities.
1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.
3.3 Encourage and reward creative strategies for engaging students in learning and life-long learning.

Related Measures

M 9: Exit Surveys
Chair will evaluate the results of exit survey from graduating M.A. students.
Source of Evidence: Client satisfaction survey (student, faculty)
Target:
AMS expects full satisfaction from M.A. graduates as indicated by exit surveys conducted by the Chair. AMS expects 100% satisfaction to indicate satisfaction with the program.

M 10: Informal Discussions of future plans
We will include indirect measures of informal discussions with majors and minors about future plans.
Source of Evidence: Discussions / Coffee Talk
Target:
Chair and Graduate Director will conduct interviews and advising sessions with all graduate students to determine career goals and provide guidance and support. AMS expects all graduate students to participate in this process.

Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)

Improving Data Gathering of Scholarly Submissions
AMS faculty will seek options for better gathering of information or adjust how the department incorporates the scholarly submissions to academic conferences as a component of the M.A. program. Currently, the AMS graduate colloquium two-semester sequence requires scholarly articles and encourages submission as professional development. The department will measure scholarly submissions and acceptances over a four-period (2011-215) to measure the effectiveness of the current system. An informal target (no formal target stated) would be for all students to submit. For 2012/13, the submission rate was just at 30%. Our action plan we be to redouble efforts within the Colloquium to foster a higher participation without incorporation into the grading process. If at the end of the four-year cycle, the rate has not gone reached a strong majority, then we will incorporate more direct measures.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Scholarly Submissions | Outcome/Objective: Developing Complex Synthetic Writing Skills
**Implementation Description:** This action plan demands a stronger assertion of Colloquium faculty to students to accept the professional development value of submission despite the additional work burden it demands.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** AMS Graduate Faculty

**Additional Resources:** Travel funding for graduate students for research and presentations.

**Improving M.A. student success at scholarly submissions**

AMS seeks to improve student success at scholarly oral presentations and publications as evidence of mastery of synthetic writing, primary research, and professional development. AMS has been hesitant to assert a specific target for submissions and acceptance due to the complex timing issues associated with conferences and journal publication in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Access to conferences varies annually, and publication (or even response from submissions) often carries over beyond the dates that students remain in the program. However, AMS remains interested in pursuing this as a measure of student success. AMS will gather information for the students entering the program in Fall 2013 and measure their participation for their two-year program and determine from that data a plan for asserting a feasible target for this measure for future M.A. students. As an initial modest target, AMS seeks to ensure that at least half of its graduate students submit material for conferences and/or publication during their time in the program.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

- **Measure:** Research Proposals | **Outcome/Objective:** Developing Complex Synthetic Writing Skills

**Implementation Description:** AMS will measure student submissions for the next two academic years to assess feasibility of asserting specific targets for student conference presentations and publications.

**Projected Completion Date:** 09/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** Lynne Adrian and Mike Innis-Jimenez

**Monitoring M.A. Applications**

Applications and admissions met targets for 2012/13. Applications were lower for the upcoming year (2013/14), which parallels overall graduate applications in other M.A. programs at UA in the Humanities and Social Sciences. AMS will continue to monitor applications. AMS will draw conclusions from two-year application data and respond accordingly.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** ongoing

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/2014

**Responsible Person/Group:** Chair and Graduate Director
Mission / Purpose

The Department of American Studies supports the liberal arts mission of the University of Alabama by providing quality general education courses and programs of study leading to the Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Arts degrees in American Studies. The Department promotes knowledge and understanding of American life through scholarly research and is committed to offering teaching and scholarship of the highest quality, which explores the ongoing dialogue about America as a nation and an idea. We strive to contribute to the quality of intellectual life on the campus, in Tuscaloosa, across the state and region, and through American Studies professional associations. We seek to provide students with scholarly opportunities to explore how they are shaped by American culture, as well as how they can shape that culture. A special component of the department's mission is to advance the study and understanding of gender, race, class, and region throughout the curriculum. We also seek to explore the many ways in which the term 'American' does not limit itself to the geographical boundaries of the United States, but expands to include transnational connections.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Developing Complex Synthetic Writing Skills
Students will demonstrate skills in presenting written arguments supported by research and synthetic thinking. Instructors will evaluate student learning by assessing student performance.

Connected Document
American Studies MA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

Standard Associations
SACS 3.3.1
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts
11 Writing - SLO is related to building on students' competency in academic writing skills and aims to extend those skills

Strategic Plan Associations
University of Alabama
1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
3.14 Provide career preparation and employment services that lead graduates to satisfying and productive careers and professions.

Related Measures

M 1: Scholarly Papers
Students will identify topics and then conduct research, and write an article-length scholarly paper to be assessed by two faculty members in AMS 596 who will calculate percent of students whose performance is judged to be satisfactory or outstanding.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
AMS assigns a target of 90% of students completing a essay worthy of presentation at a scholarly conference and with potential for expansion into a full-length article.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
All graduate students initiate, research, and write a research paper worthy of scholarly presentation as an essential component of the M.A. program. In 2013, students performed at 100% as evaluated by two AMS graduate faculty members. Thus the measure met the departmental target. INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS: This is a vital component of graduate student learning and encompasses all critical thinking and synthetic writing skills necessary for success for graduates of M.A. work in American Studies. AMS will continue to require the task and to maintain the quality of essays produced in the first-year colloquium courses that all M.A. students take.

M 2: Scholarly Submissions
Students will be encouraged to submit the scholarly articles they write in Colloquium to appropriate scholarly conferences. Faculty members will calculate percent of students who submit scholarly articles.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
AMS is hesitant to assert a specific target for student submissions for scholarly presentations or publications. The timing of academic publications in the Humanities and Social Sciences is often beyond the reasonable expectations regarding measuring success while the student remains in the program. Moreover, availability of conference outlets for students may vary every year and be influenced by topics. However, AMS strongly encourages students to engage in such efforts and will continue to do so while also trying to develop a helpful and
functional target to help measure student learning success of synthetic writing skills with this measure.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
RESULTS SUMMARY: AMS strongly urges students, upon completion of essays required for the first-year colloquium, to take the next professional step to submit the essay for presentation at a scholarly conference. The submission is not required or tied to a grade for the Colloquium itself. Matching a paper topic with an available conference often requires more complicated timing and often extends into the second year of the M.A. for many students. However, students are strongly encouraged to take this additional step in their professional development, and instructor feedback is provided with that goal in mind. Although AMS is not reporting assessment data on this measure in this cycle (having chosen to follow a four-year cycle to allow for substantive information on our current policy), we will record here that 3 of 10 students submitted to scholarly conferences in 2012/13 and gained acceptance; the number for 2011/12 was 4 of 10 (this data was unavailable and not published in the previous report cycle). INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS: AMS remains confident that this assignment, though not mandated, is an important part of student learning in the M.A. program and encourages students becoming vested in the profession as early as possible. AMS has yet to determine a viable measure to ensure student participation.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
For full information, see the Details of Action Plans section of this report.

Improving Data Gathering of Scholarly Submissions
Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
AMS faculty will seek options for better gathering of information or adjust how the department incorporates the scholarly subs...

M 3: Synthetic Writing and Cultural Complexity
Students will demonstrate understanding of essential methodologies and cultural artifacts in relationship to the complexity and diversity of American culture with researched oral presentations.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
AMS asserts a target that 90% of students achieve an 80% or higher on oral presentations as evaluated and averaged by faculty members.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
AMS graduate students through their mandatory experience in the Colloquium two-semester course must demonstrate significant capacity to produce writing with complex synthetic thinking. For the 2012/13 year, 100% of students successfully met this requirement.

M 5: Research Proposals
The Chair will track the number of graduate student research proposals accepted for presentation at scholarly conferences. Graduate instructors will encourage and support graduate student efforts to present research at scholarly conferences.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
The Chair and Graduate Director will monitor the efforts of graduate students to submit papers for scholarly presentation and publication and their success rate as a measure of mastery of complex synthetic thinking skills. AMS has yet to establish a specific target but strongly encourages students to participate in this professional development.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Partially Met
AMS has yet to establish functional targets for this goal and will seek to do so as part of its M.A. Action Plan.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
For full information, see the Details of Action Plans section of this report.

Improving M.A. student success at scholarly submissions
Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
AMS seeks to improve student success at scholarly oral presentations and publications as evidence of mastery of synthetic writin...

SLO 2: Understanding Complexity and Diversity of American Culture
Students will demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of American culture and its interrelationships with cultural artifacts and to appreciate how and why American culture changes over time through presentation of oral reports and/or essay exams. Instructors will evaluate student success.

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Relevant Associations:
The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

Standard Associations

SACS 3.3.1
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
3.3.1.4 Research within its educational mission

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6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

Strategic Plan Associations
University of Alabama
3.14 Provide career preparation and employment services that lead graduates to satisfying and
productive careers and professions.
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educational systems, health care, the arts, and other professions, and who will be leaders in their
communities.

Related Measures

M 3: Synthetic Writing and Cultural Complexity
Students will demonstrate understanding of essential methodologies and cultural artifacts in relationship to the
complexity and diversity of American culture with researched oral presentations.
Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
The article-length essay produced in the Colloquium two-semester course sequence by definition requires the
demonstration of student learning regarding the complexity and diversity of American culture. Moreover, the
content of the course and the steady interaction with the topics of peers reinforces this complexity.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
AMS reports that for the 2012/13 year, 100% of students successfully met this measure as determined by the
two faculty members responsible for the Colloquium.

M 4: Analyzing Interrelationships Between Cultural Artifacts
Students will demonstrate capacity to identify and analyze interrelationships between various cultural artifacts in
course oral presentations. Two faculty members in the Colloquium will evaluate the quality of content and analysis.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

Target:
The target for this measure is for 90% of students to achieve a 80% or higher in the average of oral
presentations.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
RESULTS SUMMARY: AMS requires that M.A. students immerse themselves in deep examination of cultural
complexity in all of their coursework. The Colloquium, however, remains the primary course sequence for
assessing student learning for Master’s students on the whole. Students make regular oral presentations to
their peers and professors throughout the fall course. These presentations are evaluated by the two graduate
faculty members responsible for the course. For 2012/13, 100% of the students achieved 80% or higher on
the average of the multiple presentations. INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS: The use of oral
presentations as an assessment tool for M.A. student learning is a helpful tool for AMS. The department will
continue to assess student performance in these assignments.

SLO 3: Developing Primary Research Skills
Students will demonstrate a strong capacity to initiate substantive research projects and conduct ambitious primary
research. Instructors will use research essay assignments to assess this skill. This measure will be employed in the first-
coursework and evaluated by two instructors.

Relevant Associations:

Standard Associations

SACS 3.3.1
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
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University of Alabama
1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.

Related Measures

M 1: Scholarly Papers
Students will identify topics and then conduct research, and write an article-length scholarly paper to be
assessed by two faculty members in AMS 596 who will calculate percent of students whose performance
is judged to be satisfactory or outstanding.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
AMS asserts that conducting primary research is a definitive part of the work of a graduate student in American
Studies and that successful completion of a full-length scholarly essay as stipulated in measure 1 for scholarly
papers also by definition measures primary research skills. AMS sets a target of 90% of graduate students to
succeed at this task.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
All graduate students initiate, research, and write a research paper worthy of scholarly presentation as an
essential component of the M.A. program. Designing a primary research plan and gathering substantive
information in support of a scholarly essay is essential and definitive of the process. In 2012/13, students
performed at 100% as evaluated by two AMS graduate faculty members. Thus the measure met the
departmental target. INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS: Conducting primary research is a vital
component of graduate student learning and encompasses all critical thinking and synthetic writing skills
necessary for success for graduates of M.A. work in American Studies. AMS will continue to require the task
and to maintain the quality of essays produced in the first-year colloquium courses that all M.A. students take.
SLO 4: Building Oral Presentation Skills
Students demonstrate a strong capacity to develop, organize, and present analytical thinking with oral presentations.

**Relevant Associations:**
The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

**Standard Associations**
- SACS 3.3.1
- 3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
- 6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts
- 10 Social and Behavioral Sciences - SLO is related to human behavior, social structures or economics
- 11 Writing - SLO is related to building on students' competency in academic writing skills and aims to extend those skills

**Strategic Plan Associations**
- University of Alabama
  - 1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.

**Related Measures**

**M 5: Research Proposals**
The Chair will track the number of graduate student research proposals accepted for presentation at scholarly conferences. Graduate instructors will encourage and support graduate student efforts to present research at scholarly conferences.

**Source of Evidence:** Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**
The Chair and Graduate Director will monitor the efforts of graduate students to submit papers for scholarly presentation and publication and their success rate as a measure of mastery of complex synthetic thinking skills. AMS has yet to establish a specific target but strongly encourages students to participate in this professional development.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**
This measure is tied to the AMS Action Plan for 2013 - 2015, wherein the department will track the efforts of students to submit for conference presentations (along with journal publication) to build of oral presentation skills.

**Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

**OthOtm 5: Maintaining High Quality - MA**
The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality.

**Relevant Associations:**

**Standard Associations**
- SACS 3.3.1
- 3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
- 6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

**Strategic Plan Associations**
- University of Alabama
  - 1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
  - 1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.
  - 4.1 Provide leadership in addressing economic, social, and cultural issues in Alabama through research and outreach activities.
  - 4.3 Produce scholars who will become academic and civic leaders in their disciplines.
  - 4.4 Produce graduates who will serve as effective leaders in Alabama's government, businesses, educational systems, health care, the arts, and other professions, and who will be leaders in their communities.
  - 4.5 Develop and reward leadership skills among students, faculty, and staff.
  - 4.8 Emphasize the creation of leaders as a core component of an education at Alabama's flagship university.

**Related Measures**

**M 6: Admission Rate to Ph.D Programs or Professional Employment**
The Chair will track and evaluate the admission rate of M.A. students choosing to apply to PhD programs and those obtaining professional employment.

**Source of Evidence:** Graduate/professional school acceptance rate

**Target:**
AMS sets as a target for successful admission rates to professional Ph.D. or related graduate programs or employment at 80% of M.A. graduates as a measure of the success of the program as maintaining recognized high quality.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**
AMS will track M.A. graduate success with regard to applications to graduate programs in pursuit of Ph.D.'s or related programs of study and in gaining related employment. The Chair will track and report results.
OthOtcm 6: Maintaining Optimal Enrollment - MA
The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and corresponding degree completions.

**Relevant Associations:**

**Standard Associations**

SACS 3.3.1

3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**

6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

**Strategic Plan Associations**

University of Alabama

1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.

**Related Measures**

**M 7: Degrees Awarded**
Chair will measure number of degrees awarded for the past three years, and compare it to ACHE viability standards.

Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

**Target:**
AMS seeks to maintain an optimal level of enrollment for its M.A. program. Based on current graduate faculty availability and limited funding for graduate assistantships, AMS determines that the optimal enrollment is 8-10 graduate students enrolled each year.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

The AMS graduate program had 10 students in 2012/13.

**M 8: Applications and Admissions**
Chair will measure the number of graduate student applications and the number admitted for the past three years.

Source of Evidence: Graduate/professional school acceptance rate

**Target:**
AMS seeks to maintain an optimal level of enrollment for its M.A. program. Based on current graduate faculty availability and limited funding for graduate assistantships, AMS determines that the optimal enrollment is 8-10 graduate students enrolled each year.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**
Applications and admissions met targets for 2012/13. Applications were lower for the upcoming year (2013/14), which parallels overall graduate applications in other M.A. programs at UA in the Humanities and Social Sciences. AMS will continue to monitor applications.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

**Monitoring M.A. Applications**
Established in Cycle: 2012-2013

Applications and admissions met targets for 2012/13. Applications were lower for the upcoming year (2013/14), which parallels ov...

For full information, see the Details of Action Plans section of this report.

OthOtcm 7: Maintaining High Value for Constituents - MA
The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves.

**Relevant Associations:**

**Standard Associations**

SACS 3.3.1

3.3.1.3 Educational support services

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**

6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

**Strategic Plan Associations**

University of Alabama

1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.

1.3 Improve communication and increase collaboration among academic and administrative units.

1.4 Align resources to most effectively support academic, scholarship, and research excellence priorities.

1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.

3.3 Encourage and reward creative strategies for engaging students in learning and life-long learning.

**Related Measures**

**M 9: Exit Surveys**
Chair will evaluate the results of exit survey from graduating M.A. students.

Source of Evidence: Client satisfaction survey (student, faculty)

**Target:**
AMS expects full satisfaction from M.A. graduates as indicated by exit surveys conducted by the Chair. AMS expects 100 % of graduates to indicate satisfaction with the program.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

All M.A. graduates students completing the program in 2012/13 indicated satisfaction with the program,
**M10: Career Plan Discussions with Chair**
Chair conducts career planning and ambition discussions with all graduate students to provide guidance and support for future plans of all students.

**Source of Evidence:** Discussions / Coffee Talk

**Target:**
Chair and Graduate Director will conduct interviews and advising sessions with all graduate students to determine career goals and provide guidance and support. AMS expects all graduate students to participate in this process.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**
All graduate students in 2012/13 fully participated in the interview process and gained vital guidance and support for career goals.

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**Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)**

### Improving Data Gathering of Scholarly Submissions
AMS faculty will seek options for better gathering of information or adjust how the department incorporates the scholarly submissions to academic conferences as a component of the M.A. program. Currently, the AMS graduate colloquium two-semester sequence requires scholarly articles and encourages submission as professional development. The department will measure scholarly submissions and acceptances over a four-period (2011-215) to measure the effectiveness of the current system. An informal target (no formal target stated) would be for all students to submit. For 2012/13, the submission rate was just at 30%. Our action plan will be to redo our efforts within the Colloquium to foster a higher participation without incorporation into the grading process. If at the end of the four-year cycle, the rate has not grown reached a 90% majority, then we will incorporate more direct measures.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012
- **Implementation Status:** In-Progress
- **Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
- **Measure:** Scholarly Submissions
- **Outcome/Objective:** Developing Complex Synthetic Writing Skills

**Implementation Description:** This action plan demands a stronger assertion of Colloquium faculty to students to accept the professional development value of submission despite the additional work burden it demands.

**Projected Completion Date:** 06/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** AMS Graduate Faculty

**Additional Resources:** Travel funding for graduate students for research and presentations.

### Improving M.A. student success at scholarly submissions
AMS seeks to improve student success at scholarly oral presentations and publications as evidence of mastery of synthetic writing, primary research, and professional development. AMS has been hesitant to assert a specific target for submissions and acceptance due to the complex timing issues associated with conferences and journal publication in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Access to conferences vary annually, and publication (or even response from submissions) often carries over beyond the dates that students remain in the program. However, AMS remains interested in pursuing this as a measure of student success. AMS will gather information for the students entering the program in Fall 2013 and measure their participation for their two-year program and determine from that data a plan for asserting a feasible target for this measure for future M.A. students. As an initial modest target, AMS seeks to ensure that at least half of its graduate students submit material for conferences and/or publication during their time in the program.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013
- **Implementation Status:** In-Progress
- **Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
- **Measure:** Research Proposals
- **Outcome/Objective:** Developing Complex Synthetic Writing Skills

**Implementation Description:** AMS will measure student submissions for the next two academic years to assess feasibility of asserting specific targets for student conference presentations and publications.

**Projected Completion Date:** 09/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** Lynne Adrian and Mike Innis-Jimenez

### Monitoring M.A. Applications
Applications and admissions met targets for 2012/13. Applications were lower for the upcoming year (2013/14), which parallels overall graduate applications in other M.A. programs at UA in the Humanities and Social Sciences. AMS will continue to monitor applications. AMS will draw conclusions from two-year application data and respond accordingly.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
- **Measure:** Applications and Admissions
- **Outcome/Objective:** Maintaining Optimal Enrollment - MA

**Implementation Description:** ongoing

**Projected Completion Date:** 09/2014

**Responsible Person/Group:** Chair and Graduate Director
Mission / Purpose

The Department of American Studies supports the liberal arts mission of the University of Alabama by providing quality general education courses and programs of study leading to the Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Arts degrees in American Studies. The Department promotes knowledge and understanding of American life through scholarly research and is committed to offering teaching and scholarship of the highest quality, which explores the ongoing dialogue about America as a nation and an idea. We strive to contribute to the quality of intellectual life on the campus, in Tuscaloosa, across the state and region, and through American Studies professional associations. We seek to provide students with scholarly opportunities to explore how they are shaped by American culture, as well as how they can shape that culture. A special component of the department's mission is to advance the study and understanding of gender, race, class, and region throughout the curriculum. We also seek to explore the many ways in which the term 'American' does not limit itself to the geographical boundaries of the United States, but expands to include transnational connections.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Research and Synthetic Writing
Students will demonstrate skills in presenting written arguments supported by research and synthetic thinking.

Connected Document
American Studies MA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

Standard Associations
SACS 3.3.1
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts
11 Writing - SLO is related to building on students' competency in academic writing skills and aims to extend those skills

Strategic Plan Associations
University of Alabama
1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
3.14 Provide career preparation and employment services that lead graduates to satisfying and productive careers and professions.

Related Measures

M 1: Scholarly Papers
Students will identify topics and then conduct research, and write an article-length scholarly paper to be assessed by two faculty members in AMS 596 who will calculate percent of students whose performance is judged to be satisfactory or outstanding.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
AMS asserts a target of 90% of students completing a essay worthy of presentation at a scholarly conference and with potential for expansion into a full-length article.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met

RESULTS SUMMARY:
All graduate students initiate, research, and write a research paper worthy of scholarly presentation as an essential component of the M.A. program. In 2011/12, students performed at 100% as evaluated by two AMS graduate faculty members. Thus the measure met the departmental target.

INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS:
This is a vital component of graduate student learning and encompasses all critical thinking and synthetic writing skills necessary for success for graduates of M.A. work in American Studies. AMS will continue to require the task and to maintain the quality of essays produced in the first-year colloquium courses that all M.A. students take.

M 2: Scholarly Submissions
Students will be encouraged to submit the scholarly articles they write in Colloquium to appropriate scholarly conferences. Faculty members will calculate percent of students who submit scholarly articles.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
No target established.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met

RESULTS SUMMARY:
AMS strongly urges students, upon completion of essays required for the first-year colloquium, to take the next professional step to submit the essay for presentation at a scholarly conference. The submission is not required or tied to a grade for the Colloquium itself. AMS currently does not yet have full data for the work of students in 2011/12. Matching a paper topic with an available conference often requires more complicated timing and often extends into the second year of the M.A. for many students. As of July 2012, AMS does not have results of submissions for the Colloquium of 2011/12.

**INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS:**
AMS remains confident that this assignment, though not mandated, is an important part of student learning in the M.A. program and encourages students becoming vested in the profession as early as possible.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**
For full information, see the Details of Action Plans section of this report.

**Improving Data Gathering of Scholarly Submissions**
*Established in Cycle: 2011-2012*
AMS faculty will seek options for better gathering of information or adjust how the department incorporates the scholarly submis...

**M 3: Delete This Item**
Delete

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**M 4: Synthetic Writing and Cultural Complexity**
Students will demonstrate understanding of essential methodologies and cultural artifacts in relationship to the complexity and diversity of American culture with researched oral presentations.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**
AMS asserts a target that 90% of students achieve an 80% or higher on oral presentations as evaluated and averaged by faculty members.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**

**SLO 2: Understanding Complexity and Diversity of American Culture**
Students will demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of American culture and its interrelationships with cultural artifacts and to appreciate how and why American culture changes over time.

**Connected Document**
American Studies MA Curriculum Maps

**Relevant Associations:**
The learning outcomes for M.A. courses are being achieved. AMS will continue to assess student learning using the first-year colloquium as the primary source for data. AMS will continue evaluating student performance on research essays and oral presentations as strongest indicators of direct measures of student learning.

**Standard Associations**
*SACs 3.3.1*
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
3.3.1.4 Research within its educational mission

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

**Strategic Plan Associations**
University of Alabama
3.14 Provide career preparation and employment services that lead graduates to satisfying and productive careers and professions.
4.3 Produce scholars who will become academic and civic leaders in their disciplines.
4.4 Produce graduates who will serve as effective leaders in Alabama's government, businesses, educational systems, health care, the arts, and other professions, and who will be leaders in their communities.

**Related Measures**

**M 4: Synthetic Writing and Cultural Complexity**
Students will demonstrate understanding of essential methodologies and cultural artifacts in relationship to the complexity and diversity of American culture with researched oral presentations.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**M 5: Analyzing Interrelationships Between Cultural Artifacts**
Students will demonstrate capacity to identify and analyze interrelationships between various cultural artifacts in course oral presentations. Two faculty members in the Colloquium will evaluate the quality of content and analysis.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

**Target:**
The target for this measure is for 90% of students to achieve a 75% or higher in the average of oral presentations.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**

**RESULTS SUMMARY:**
AMS requires that M.A. students immerse themselves in deep examination of cultural complexity in all of their coursework. The Colloquium, however, remains the primary course sequence for assessing student learning for Master’s students on the whole. Students make regular oral presentations to their peers and professors throughout the fall course. These presentations are evaluated by the two graduate faculty members responsible for the course. For 2011/12, 100% of the students achieved 80% or higher on the average of the multiple presentations.

INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS:
The use of oral presentations as an assessment tool for M.A. student learning is a helpful tool for AMS. The department will continue to assess student performance in these assignments.

M 6: Continue to Monitor
We will continue to monitor writing assignments in these classes for interrelationships and synthetic knowledge.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

OthOtcn 3: Maintaining Recognized High Quality
The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality.

Relevant Associations:

Standard Associations
SACS 3.3.1
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

Strategic Plan Associations
University of Alabama
1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.
4.1 Provide leadership in addressing economic, social, and cultural issues in Alabama through research and outreach activities.
4.3 Produce scholars who will become academic and civic leaders in their disciplines.
4.4 Produce graduates who will serve as effective leaders in Alabama's government, businesses, educational systems, health care, the arts, and other professions, and who will be leaders in their communities.
4.5 Develop and reward leadership skills among students, faculty, and staff.
4.8 Emphasize the creation of leaders as a core component of an education at Alabama's flagship university.

Related Measures

M 7: Research Proposals
The number of graduate student research proposals accepted for presentation at scholarly conferences.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

M 8: Admission Rate to Ph.D programs or professional employment
The admission rate of M.A. students choosing to apply to PhD programs and those obtaining professional employment.

Source of Evidence: Graduate/professional school acceptance rate

M 9: Measure addressing evaluation of improvement action
measure addressing evaluation of improvement action, if any

Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

OthOtcn 4: Maintaining Optimal Level of Enrollment
The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and degree completions.

Relevant Associations:

Standard Associations
SACS 3.3.1
3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations
6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

Strategic Plan Associations
University of Alabama
1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.

Related Measures

M 9: Measure addressing evaluation of improvement action
measure addressing evaluation of improvement action, if any

Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

M 10: Degrees Awarded
Chair will measure number of degrees awarded for the past three years, and compare it to ACHE viability standards.
Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

**M 11: Applications and Admissions**
Chair will measure the number of graduate student applications and the number admitted for the past three years.
Source of Evidence: Graduate/professional school acceptance rate

**OthOtcm 5: Maintaining High Value Defined by Constituents**
The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves.

**Relevant Associations:**

- **Standard Associations**
  - SACS 3.3.1
    - 3.3.1.3 Educational support services

- **General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
  - 6 Humanities - SLO is related to students' ability to deal with questions of values, ethics, or aesthetics as they are represented in literature, philosophy, religion and the arts

- **Strategic Plan Associations**
  - University of Alabama
    - 1.1 Promote and enhance areas of academic, scholarship, and research excellence.
    - 1.3 Improve communication and increase collaboration among academic and administrative units.
    - 1.4 Align resources to most effectively support academic, scholarship, and research excellence priorities.
    - 1.5 Effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities.
    - 3.3 Encourage and reward creative strategies for engaging students in learning and life-long learning.

**Related Measures**

- **M 9: Measure addressing evaluation of improvement action**
  measure addressing evaluation of improvement action, if any
  Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

- **M 12: Exit Surveys**
  Chair will evaluate the results of exit survey from graduating M.A. students.
  Source of Evidence: Client satisfaction survey (student, faculty)

- **M 13: Informal Discussions of future plans**
  We will include indirect measures of informal discussions with majors and minors about future plans.
  Source of Evidence: Discussions / Coffee Talk

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**Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)**

**Improving Data Gathering of Scholarly Submissions**
AMS faculty will seek options for better gathering of information or adjust how the department incorporates the scholarly submissions to academic conferences as a component of the M.A. program.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
- **Measure:** Scholarly Submissions | **Outcome/Objective:** Research and Synthetic Writing

**Implementation Description:** This action plan demands consultation among AMS faculty members to define the issue and seek options.

- **Projected Completion Date:** 06/2015
- **Responsible Person/Group:** AMS Graduate Faculty
- **Additional Resources:** None
Curriculum Maps #1 (In which courses or in what activities or assignments are Student Learning Outcomes Addressed)

Use “Introduce” when outcome is first addressed; “Reinforce” when outcome is reinforced; and “Master” when outcome is expected to be mastered. Note that you do not need to obtain a measure from every course in which an outcome is addressed (see Map #2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course 1 585</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 1 (To demonstrate skills in presenting written arguments.)</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 2 (To demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of American culture and its interrelationship with cultural artifacts and to appreciate how and why American culture changes over time.)</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 3</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 4</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course 2 586</td>
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<td>Course 3 595</td>
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<td>Common Experience 597—Comprehensive Examinations</td>
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Required Task

Common Assignment

Activity 1

Activity 2

Activity 3
## Activity 4

**Curriculum Map II** (What assessment measures will be employed in which courses/activities/assignments for each Student learning Outcome)

Indicate which measure is being obtained in which course by typing “Measure n.n” in the appropriate cell. If you’d rather use a description of the measure, that is fine. Also, indicate the year/semester in which the measure will be obtained (e.g., Fall 2011). Student learning outcomes must be assessed at least once within a 2 ½ year period. Note that a measure does not need to be obtained from every course in which an outcome is covered (see Map #1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 1</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 2</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 3</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 4</th>
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<td><strong>Required Experience</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Common Experience</strong></td>
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<td>full-length interpretive essays</td>
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