Program Level Assessment Report for 2012-2013

PROGRAM NAME, DEGREE NAME
(e.g. Organizational Leadership, B.S.): International Studies, B.A.

COLLEGE in which PROGRAM is housed: CoLA

REPORT PREPARED by: December Green

A. ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

What actions did you take in 2012-2013, based on previous assessment findings, to improve student learning in your program? (Refer back to plans indicated in “Response to Assessment Findings” in 2011-2012 Assessment Report.)

The evidence suggested that the International Studies program was meeting its goals and therefore no actions were recommended.

B. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSED AND EXAMINED

Which Program Level Student Learning Outcomes did you assess and examine during 2012-2013? List the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes using the format of “Graduates will be able to”

- Graduates will attain proficiency in a second language
  
  100% of our graduating seniors passed three years of a foreign language (or tested at equivalency) and could be said to have attained proficiency in a second language.

- Graduates will be able to conduct independent research and will have effective research skills.

  The director collected writing samples from graduating seniors and the IS Advisory Committee used a rubric to evaluate the papers in regard to the learning objectives. The evidence from the writing samples suggests a high success rate in meeting our goals in regard to writing, research, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. For example, of the 18 papers submitted, only one paper failed on all four measures. Fourteen of the 18 papers passed on all four measures.

- Graduates will have strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills; and will be effective writers;

  Please see above.
(Please note that due to specialized accreditation requirements, accredited programs may be required to assess and report on all program level student learning outcomes every year; accredited programs should report in a manner that will align with their accreditation. Programs not carrying specialized accreditation may assess all of their learning outcomes every year but may choose to report on 2-3 per year, looking at several years of data.)

C. METHODS FOR COLLECTING DATA

Which students were included in the assessment? (For example, all seniors completing Course X in Spring 2013, all graduating seniors, etc.)

All graduating seniors were assessed for proficiency in a second language. The director requested a writing sample from all graduating seniors and 18 of 29 of these students submitted one.¹

D. ASSESSMENT MEASURES

• What key assessments/assignments/student work did you examine to directly assess the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes listed above?

To assess proficiency in a second language: transcripts (as evidence of a passing grade in the third year of language). To assess research, critical thinking, and writing skills: writing samples (each evaluated by three readers using a rubric).

• What, if any, indirect assessments (e.g. exit survey, alumni survey, focus groups, etc.) did you use to indirectly assess the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes listed above?

The director conducted exit interviews with all graduating seniors and an alumni survey.

E. SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

What did you find from your assessments? What did your data reveal about how well students are achieving the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes that you listed above?

In their exit interviews with the director, 100% of graduating seniors expressed satisfaction with the major. The most common areas of strength were the flexibility of the curriculum, range of courses available and major advising. The most common areas identified for improvement were to offer certain IS Core courses more often and to offer more language.

The director emailed a survey to 172 alumni (all IS majors for whom Alumni Relations had contact information) in June 2013 to assess whether our learning objectives are being met. The learning objectives and results of the survey are as follows:

1) Graduates are prepared to obtain acceptance to graduate or professional schools:

¹ The director asked graduating seniors to bring a writing sample to the exit interview. Students who failed to do so were reminded of this request at the interview and, when necessary, again in an email before graduation.
100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were prepared to obtain acceptance to graduate or professional schools (7 of 14 respondents strongly agreed; 1 agreed; 5 answered “not applicable;” 1 did not indicate an answer).

2) Graduates are prepared to obtain employment in occupations related to the major:

100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were prepared to obtain employment in occupations related to the major (5 strongly agreed; 7 agreed; 1 answered “not applicable;” 1 did not indicate an answer).

3) Graduates believe that their degrees enhanced their own self-understanding and understanding of the complexities of the world.

100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their degrees enhanced their own self-understanding and understanding of the complexities of the world (10 strongly agreed; 3 agreed; 1 did not indicate an answer).

F. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

How were results shared? With whom were they discussed?

The director has discussed the need to offer the IS Core courses more often with the heads of the relevant departments. The director has met with the Chair of Modern Languages, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and the University Center for International Education’s Internationalization of the Curriculum Committee to discuss the need for Chinese and Arabic to be offered through the fourth year. The Department of Modern Languages will begin offering a fourth year of Chinese in Fall 2014.

G. ACTIONS PLANNED TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

Based on what you learned from your assessment of the Program Level Student Learning Outcomes, what actions do the faculty in your program plan to take to improve student learning in your program/area? Describe the steps faculty have taken/will take to use information from the assessments for improvement of student performance and the program. List additional faculty meetings or discussions and planned or actual changes to curriculum, teaching methods, approaches, or services that are in response to the assessment findings.

The good news is that it appears that the learning objectives are currently being met for the majority of IS grads. There is room for improvement in regard to our students’ writing and critical thinking skills. However, because International Studies is not a department and does not house a faculty, and because in any given semester IS majors choose from approximately 100 different courses (not only in CoLa, but across colleges), convening such a meeting is not feasible. Consequently, IS relies on discussions (of how to improve our students’ research and writing skills) led at the department, college, and university levels (i.e.: Writing across the Curriculum).

H. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (recommended)
Please attach minutes of program faculty meeting where discussion of results and action planning occurred and any other relevant documents.

Rubric for evaluation of writing samples
2013 alumni survey
Comments from 2013 alumni survey
Program Assessment Plan for International Studies
Rubric for Evaluation of Writing Samples

Paper Title: ____________________________________________________________

Please provide a yes or no answer for the following questions:

a. Are the sources in this paper cited consistently and in a recognizable style?  
   ______

b. Does this paper use sources critically? _________

c. Does this paper have a thesis? _____________

d. Does this paper present an argument in support of the thesis? ____________
Hello ${vars["personalizedtags__first"]}

If you graduated in the 1980s or 1990s, my name probably doesn’t ring a bell, but I’m hoping that those of you who finished your degree since then will remember me. Anyway, I direct the International Studies major (your major) and I’m reaching out to you to catch up, find out how you’re doing, and to get your input on how we can continue to strengthen the program (which is still going strong, by the way, with +120 majors).

Here’s the deal: every few years I poll alumni for information to use in an assessment report that Wright State submits to maintain our accreditation. I know that you’re a busy person, but if for no other reason than that it’s in your interest for your alma mater to remain accredited, I’m hoping that you’ll take just a few minutes to answer the following questions and return this form to me.

In other words, I really need your help with this effort and no, I’m not asking for money (although donations to the program are always gladly accepted).

So, please just either type in your answers next to my questions and email this back to me or save it as a PDF, fill it out, and send it back as an attachment. Either way is good.

Thanks in advance for your help,

December Green

December Green
Director, International Studies

PS: We are also doing a major overhaul of our website and I want to share news of your accomplishments. Please visit it once it’s up in the fall, and let’s keep in touch so that I can add any updates.

Please indicate your view in regard to the following statements:

1. My degree prepared me to obtain acceptance to graduate or professional schools.

   Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree  N/A
Comments:

2. I was prepared with the skills necessary to obtain employment in occupations related to my major.

   Strongly agree   Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

   Comments:

3. My degree enhanced my own self-understanding as well as my understanding of the complexities of the world.

   Strongly agree   Agree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

   Comments:

Occupations held since graduation:

Current occupation/position:

Graduate degrees pursued or attained (indicate degree, school, and year):
Comments from 2013 IS Alumni Survey

1. My degree prepared me to obtain acceptance to graduate or professional schools.
   - Yes, the program is one of the best at Wright State University. As an interdisciplinary degree, it provides an international perspective on issues such as economics, political science, history, and allows more concentrated coursework in subjects and geographical regions aligned with a student’s interest.
   - I was admitted in the Master of Humanities program at Wright State University.
   - I was accepted into two graduate programs and received a position as a Graduate Research Assistant. I attribute much of what prepared me for the workplace to an internship that I completed with Catholic Social Services for the Refugee Resettlement Program.
   - I have yet to decide if going to grad school is worth it, or just going to Sinclair and getting an associate in something more specific (like a physical therapy assistant.)
   - I did not pursue graduate education after completion of undergraduate studies. I am just now considering going back to school part-time.
   - Program was challenging and allowed me to be prepared to get my MA in International and Comparative Politics!

2. I was prepared with the skills necessary to obtain employment in occupations related to my major.
   - The curriculum gives students a global perspective on several issues built around the intersections of international knowledge and engagement. For me, it was very helpful with the positions I held since graduation.
   - My BA in International Studies gave me access to the world largest Not-For-Profit organizations.
   - I feel that the program really helped to enhance my critical thinking skills and communication skills, both written and oral. The inclusion of the foreign language requirement is particularly important as more jobs are preferring candidates with language capabilities.
   - I have not obtained a job where I use the education/skills from my degree. I did however get my job solely because I have a degree. However, I do not use any brain power to accomplish the work.
   - I felt I had sufficient skills to take a job in the field, but at the time there weren’t many options and I did not end up working in this field. There are some things I would’ve done differently looking back now.
   - I think that it is very hard to get a job in the social science field at this point, so more concrete career building skills would be helpful (patience is also important!)
3. My degree enhanced my own self-understanding as well as my understanding of the complexities of the world.
   - I strongly concur with this statement
   - I was able to successfully begin my career in International Development.
   - I really loved that there are so many tracks available as a part of the IS program. The Comparative Cultures track allows for such an interdisciplinary curriculum. It has really helped me to think about issues from many different perspectives, tying in politics, religion, gender studies, and linguistics.
   - DEFINITELY!! I can talk about world events and causes with anyone and be able to add value to the conversation. I have also taught people things they didn’t know or misunderstood about different countries, people, cultures, and politics.
   - I felt enriched by my grasp of world events, geography, culture, etc. and am often the one or few persons among my peers who do.
   - I definitely feel like I learned a great deal about other cultures and their political systems, and the program fostered a respect for difference in the world.