

ASSESSMENT SHOWCASE



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT SHOWCASE

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SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COMMISSION ON COLLEGES (SACSCOC)

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. The Commission's mission is the enhancement of educational quality throughout the region and it strives to improve the effectiveness of institutions by ensuring that institutions meet standards established by the higher education community that address the needs of society and students. It serves as the common denominator of shared values and practices among the diverse institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Latin America and other international sites approved by the Commission on Colleges that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees. The Commission also accepts applications from other international institutions of higher education.

PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Vision

Southern Miss will emerge as the premier research university of the Gulf South – engaging and empowering individuals to transform lives and communities.

Mission

The University of Southern Mississippi is a comprehensive research extensive university. Our primary mission is to cultivate intellectual development and creativity through the generation, dissemination, application, and preservation of knowledge.

Our mission is supported by the values that have been formed through the history and traditions of our institution. These values are widely and deeply held beliefs of our faculty, staff, students, and administrators:

Education provides opportunities to improve the quality of intellectual, social, economic, and personal well-being. These opportunities should be available to all who are willing and able to meet our standards of excellence.

Our success is reflected by the degree to which our students become well-read, articulate, and creative and critical thinkers. It is measured by their display of specialized knowledge and abilities suitable to the pursuit of a career and life in our complex, ever-changing world.

We cherish innovation in the creation and application of basic and applied research findings, creative and artistic expression, meaningful learning experiences, the scope of services provided to our students and the broader community that we sustain, and the continuing evolution of degree programs that both respond to and anticipate the evolving demands of our society, employers, and the labor market.

Education encourages and advances the ideals of a pluralistic democratic society: civic responsibility, integrity, diversity, and ethical behavior.

Academic freedom and shared governance are long-established and living principles at the university. We cherish the free exchange of ideas, diversity of thought, joint decision making, and individuals' assumption of responsibility.

We make efficient and effective use of our resources, for we are accountable to our university communities, the Board of Trustees, and taxpayers.

Plan

Four priorities guide the University of Southern Mississippi, each helping to support our vision. These priorities, identified through a strategic planning process in 2007-08, provide a solid foundation for progress.

A CLIMATE FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

IMAGE DEVELOPMENT

CONNECTIONS WITH COMMUNITY

HEALTHY MINDS, BODIES AND CAMPUSES

A CLIMATE FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Our vision for a climate of academic success includes a unified environment that minimizes barriers for prospective and enrolled students; attracts and retains quality faculty and staff embraces and reflects diversity; and produces graduates who are truly competitive in the global marketplace.

Students, faculty and staff at Southern Miss, along with the larger community, benefit from a wide range of cultural, social and educational experiences that yield informed, responsible, and productive citizens with a standard of lifelong learning.

University experiences are supported by quality facilities and up-to-date technology accessible to the entire university community. Educational programs adhere to rigorous standards in terms of student advisement, engagement, and mentoring; curriculum development and delivery; and the exploration and generation of scholarly and creative work.

Students admitted to Southern Miss have every opportunity to earn a degree and acquire a comprehensive educational foundation that expands their perspectives, enhances their opportunity, and enriches our society.

Supporting Measures: Baccalaureate degrees awarded/Six-

IMAGE DEVELOPMENT

Image development promotes the internal and external reputation of the university and supports the vision of Southern Miss. Image development must be linked to what we do and how well we do it.

Supporting Measures: Results on Chronicle/Gallup Branding Index/Scores in U.S. News & Forbes University rankings/Positive national media coverage/Surveys of prospective and current students.

CONNECTIONS WITH COMMUNITY

We envision engaged citizens of Southern Miss (students, staff, faculty and alumni) who genuinely invest in their university community and their host communities (locally, regionally, nationally and globally). Our engaged citizens intentionally build community through learning and working together inside and outside the university in order to create and sustain a culture of respect and civility. We do this through hosting, serving, and sharing.

- Hosting refers to the importance of every contact made on campus – from the first to the last.
- Serving allows university citizens to invest in people, agencies/businesses, and organizations through volunteering, service learning, internships, applied scholarship and university/community partnerships.
- Sharing focuses on how we build relationships and engagement inside the university and with our host communities.

Supporting Measures: Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory results/Student volunteer hours/Sq. ft of sharing (social/learning) space/Attendance at university-sponsored events/Externally funded applied initiatives/Total endowment.

HEALTHY MINDS, BODIES, & CAMPUSES

A culture that emphasizes a multidimensional healthy environment at Southern Miss is deemed central to attain the goals of this strategic plan. An emphasis on healthy lifestyles will enhance the quality of the Southern Miss experience and beyond. Appropriate efforts in campus sustainability and environmental education will contribute to an improved environmental impact and an informed perspective on resource use. Continuous efforts to contribute

University Assessment Committee Policy Regarding Academic Programs'

Plan and Report Guidelines

Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines

PLAN GUIDELINES:

1. All USM degree programs on the IHL Academic Program Inventory assess student learning outcomes at the program level.
2. Separate assessment plans are encouraged at the emphasis level.
3. To assist with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) assessment requirements, all teacher licensure programs assess at the emphasis level.
4. Programs that offer separate online emphasis areas or distinct emphasis areas at different sites assess separately.
5. Programs with two degrees at the same level in the same subject can choose to assess within one plan or separate plans.
6. Program-level Assessment Plans have a minimum of five student learning outcomes.
7. Each student learning outcome must have two measures; one must be a direct measure.
8. Course grades cannot be used as measures.

REPORT GUIDELINES:

Programs offered at multiple teaching sites or by multiple delivery modes must report their findings by site and include all sites and/or modes in the findings analysis.

The following components are required for a complete assessment report:

1. Findings (separated by site/mode if applicable)
2. Action Plans (required in year 2 of the assessment cycle)
3. Analysis
4. Program Summary
5. Continuous Improvement Initiatives
6. Closing the Loop

Certificate Program Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines

All certificate programs must identify a minimum of two student learning outcomes. Each student learning outcome must be assessed with at least one direct measure.

Certificate programs must assess annually, following program-level calendars. The following components are required for a complete assessment report:

1. Findings (separated by site/mode if applicable)
2. Action Plans
3. 2-part Analysis to include Closing the Loop as applicable

Stand-alone Minor Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines

All stand-alone minors must identify a minimum of two student learning outcomes.

Assessment Process Overview

SACSCOC FIFTH-YEAR INTERIM REPORT

The university's Fifth-Year Interim Report was submitted March 26, 2012. The Fifth-Year Interim Report consists of an abbreviated compliance report that addresses select standards of the Principles of Accreditation and the QEP Impact Report. The Impact Report is a report demonstrating the extent to which the QEP has affected outcomes related to student learning. Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1 subsection 3.3.3.1 (*educational programs, to include student learning outcomes*) was one of the standards addressed.

Supporting documentation. A sample of reports from assessment cycles 2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011 representing all five colleges, degree levels, teaching sites, and delivery modes were included as supporting documentation for SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1.

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HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION EdD/PhD
2010-2011 Program-

Measures

A measure identifies evidence and methods used to determine achievement of expected outcomes. Targets show criteria for success for each student learning outcome. The findings that result from these measures should be used to demonstrate student learning and provide direction for improving learning.

Measures and Targets should show progressive distinction between degree levels (BA, MA, PhD) in the same academic unit. Simple rates, frequencies, or percentages of activities are not true measures of student learning outcomes.

Direct Measures

The best measures for student learning are direct measures in which students demonstrate that they know or can do the specified learning outcome. Direct measures directly evaluate student work. Examples of direct measures include portfolios, exams, papers, projects, presentations, performances, standardized tests, licensure exams, comprehensives, and internship evaluations.

An overall course grade is NOT an acceptable direct measure. And in various cases, an overall exam, project, or paper grade is not an appropriate measure. However, the grading process can be used for assessment, if the classroom exam or assignment actually measures the learning outcome and the criteria for evaluating student work is stated explicitly in writing (usually in the form of a rubric).

Indirect Measures

Indirect methods such as surveys and interviews ask students to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate it. Indirect measures also include job placement rates, admission rates into graduate programs, employer surveys, alumni surveys, focus groups, honors/awards earned by students & alumni, student participation rates in research publications, & conference presentations.

Expressing Measures

Measures should be detailed and specific. Measurement should ensure that comparisons are “apples to apples,” and should ascertain that, for those programs that are offered at more than one site or by more than one mode,

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MARKETING BSBA*

Program-level Direct Measure

M 5: Marketing research exam

The Marketing Research Exam Core Knowledge Questions. The questions come from 4 exams throughout the semester and cover the techniques and issues surrounding collecting market information.

Achievement Target:

70% of students will score 70 or above on the core knowledge questions.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Fall 2010

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES BIS

Program-level Indirect Measure

M 4: Placement Data

Students will report on their post-baccalaureate placement.

Achievement Target:

80% of IDS grads will report employment or graduate admission in the first 6 months after graduation.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Partially Met

of 128 students who graduated in the past cycle, 90 (70%) reported full time employment within 6 months, 12 (9%) reported part-time employment, 11 (8.5%) are attending post-baccalaureate programs, 22 (17%) did not report. (Some people reported more than one status).

COUNSELING AND PERSONNEL SERVICES (SCHOOL COUNSELING) MEd

Program-level Indirect Measure

M 9: Course/Program Reflection

Candidate Course/Program Reflections. Reflections are used solely for program development and are scored by completion only. However, program committee members feel strongly that students continue their learning through personal reflections of progress. Students will also reflect on their ability to establish maintain relationships and their progress toward becoming an effective counselor.

Achievement Target:

Each cohort will complete a reflection. One cohort focuses on personal growth and the other cohort includes their analysis of the program.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Summer 2011: The first year cohort in (N=14) completed a detailed analysis of their individual growth during the summer. This reflection included "aha" moments, areas of concern for their personal growth, and an overall assessment of summer one. It was noted that the students found a tremendous difference in the professional approach to assist students versus the way they worked with students as a teacher. Each student was asked to identify an area of concern, which was documented and will be used as a foundational piece during the online sessions of WIMBA this fall. The second year cohort all felt that the program satisfactorily assisted them in establishing and maintaining relationships with k-12 students. Over half reported strongly satisfied. (N=13)

HYDROGRAPHIC SCIENCE MS**

Program-level Indirect Measure

M 1: Employer Survey

Employers will be polled to determine level of understanding and preparedness of alumni. Evaluation will be based on Employer Evaluation Instrument responses.

Achievement Target:

90% of employer respondents feel that their graduates have a good understanding of hydrography and are in favorable positions to move forward in their careers. Evaluation will be based on Employer Evaluation Instrument responses. Each question in the instrument will have a 1 to 5 scale response (significantly below peers to substantially above peers), with an average of 3 (same as peers) considered to be a minimum affirmative response.

Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met

Survey was conducted 20 June - 18 August 2011. Four responses received of 18 sent. Three of six U.S. Government organizations, one of five commercial companies, and none of seven foreign hydrographic organizations. 100% of employer respondents felt that their graduates have a good understanding of hydrography and that graduates are in favorable positions to move forward in their careers. The average rating was 3.75 for bathymetry.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS BSBA

Analysis Answers

What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?

ANTHROPOLOGY BS

Analysis Answers

What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?

In 2010-2011, the program in anthropology focused on assessing student skills and working to ensure that students are gaining knowledge of theory, can apply the perspective on anthropology to the "real world," are able to conduct a research project and present their findings, and feel prepared for success upon graduation. Our students met all targets set, and findings indicate that students are particularly strong in theoretical understanding and application as well as the ability to craft a resume, cover letter, and personal statement. We will continue to look closely at our outcomes and measures throughout 2011-2012 to ensure that our students are improving an

Annual Reporting

Annual Reporting Fields

The 2011-2012 Assessment Report includes the following Annual Reporting data elements:

PROGRAM SUMMARY

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SPORT COACHING EDUCATION MS**

Program Summary

The Master of Science in Sport Coaching Education (SCE), housed in the School of Human Performance and Recreation, was approved for online delivery by the Graduate Council in January of 2006 with a launch in the fall semester of that year. The program includes 36 hours of graduate coursework related to all domains of the coaching profession. The mission of the graduate program in Sport Coaching Education is to prepare professionals throughout the country for an advanced coaching career by enhancing their critical thinking skills and exposing them to expert knowledge and research in the field of coaching education. Students enrolled in the Master of Science in Sport Coaching Education program are learning current approaches to the coaching profession including administrative philosophy and responsibility, psychosocial factors related to coaching, training techniques, and technological advances in athletic evaluation. The purpose of the program is to prepare students to be a standards-based coach for a range of athletes, with an emphasis on interscholastic and intercollegiate athletics. The MS in Sport Coaching Education was recently awarded the eLearning Initiative grant from USM in partnership with Blackboard to enhance the delivery of the online program. The initiative included marketing strategies, branding materials, and faculty instruction workshops, which were implemented for the Fall 2010 semester. Due to increased marketing that is scheduled to begin this summer, the faculty in SCE are projecting a rapid increase in enrollment. It is the primary goal of the faculty in SCE to make the online master's program one of only 2 Level V NCACE accredited programs in the country; the only that is fully online.

COMPUTER ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY BS

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

As with all programs at the University, the CET program strives to maintain a robust assessment plan to measure program performance and determine how findings may be impacted to best effect the desired program outcomes and objectives. The CET program is currently involved in discussions with IE to utilize WEAVEOnline with TAC of ABET assessment requirements to serve the two-fold purpose of supplying the appropriate data for University assessment, while at the same time simplifying the objective data measurement process for ABET criteria a-k. With the current requirements for assessment, the CET program has two action plans which are not directly tied to any specific measure, but are used to emphasize data collection importance to the faculty concerning data collection for both University assessment and ABET assessment. The Departmental/Administrative Calendar action plan is intended to provide the faculty with a method that can easily remind them of dates and events for data collection for our assessment purposes. Of course the calendar could be used for other purposes also. The second action plan is the End of Course Surveys. As required by our ABET assessment, the CET program administers a survey to each of its major classes at the end of the semester to determine how students feel the outcomes of the course were met. This information is also used in some of the University assessment for WEAVE. The CET program is looking forward to the development of an assessment plan utilizing WEAVE that will serve to reduce to assessment workload for both SACS and ABET, and increase the overall strength of the systems.

PUBLIC HEALTH MPH

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Based on a spring 2011 Master of Public Health (MPH) student assimilation assessment, the department is considering establishing a MPH Professional Development Seminar. The seminar would include resources and guidance in the areas of teaching, research and service. Students expressed interest in attending Professional Development seminars, but reported limited opportunities in this area. The USM chapter of the Health

Administration Student Association (HASA) was organized during the 2009-2010 academic year. Over the last year, HASA has built tremendous momentum among graduate and undergraduate students in the department. HASA provides students with professional networking opportunities, career planning and workshops and presentations by healthcare administrators from local, state and national levels. Students have shown an interest in organizing additional public health student associations. The department is committed to improving communication with undergraduate and graduate students by using a variety of communication media. In the aforementioned survey, MPH students reported using the following information sources moderately to a great deal. Information resources are presented in rank order from high to low percentage: student peers 85%; academic advisors 78.8%; graduate listserv 67.5%; orientation materials 65%; student support staff 60%; faculty mentor 56.4%; department website 37.5%; and campus hub 20%. This information will be used to enhance departmental communication.

HUMAN PERFORMANCE (KINESIOTHERAPY) BS

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

The Kinesiotherapy (KT) major continues to attract a large number of students, many who have goals of applying to doctorate level therapy programs following graduation. In order to build on the current success of the program and to increase its viability, several changes are currently under consideration. These include but are not limited to, creating additional courses that are specific the requisite treatment approaches of KT, and also increasing the GPA requirements for entering the major.

PSYCHOLOGY BA/BS*

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

The Department has undertaken several activities to address program improvement issues. The following

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY BS*

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

This program underwent a 6th year TAC-ABET accreditation visit in fall 2010. From that visit, it was apparent that the program objectives in WeaveOnline did not provide adequate resolution from program level to course level. The organization of supporting materials and student samples of work was also extremely

POLITICAL SCIENCE MA/MS*

Closing the Loop

Previous action plans called for changing our research methods sequence from a 500 level sequence to a 600

Recommended Reading

General Assessment Resources

Assessment Clear and Simple

Barbara E. Walvoord
John Wiley & Sons ©2010

Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide

Linda Suskie
John Wiley & Sons ©2010

Designing Effective Assessment: Principles and Profiles of Good Practice

Trudy W. Banta, Elizabeth A. Jones, Karen E. Black
John Wiley & Sons ©2009

Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers

Thomas A. Angelo & K. Patricia Cross
John Wiley & Sons ©1993

The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach

Judith Grunert O'Brien
John Wiley & Sons ©2008

Effective Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment in College

Barbara E. Walvoord
John Wiley & Sons ©2010

Introduction To Rubrics: An Assessment Tool To Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback and Promote Student Learning

Dannelle D. Stevens
Stylus Publishing ©2005

Discipline-Specific Assessment Resources

Assessment in Engineering Programs: Evolving Best Practices

Edited by William E. Kelly
© AIR

Assessment of Student Learning in College Mathematics: Towards Improved Programs and Courses

Edited by Bernard L. Madison
© AIR

Assessment of Student Learning in Business Schools: Best Practices Each Step of the Way

Edited by Kathryn Martell and Thomas Calderon
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