Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Program - Homeland Security Master's Program

College: Arts and Sciences

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Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

Department of Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences. The Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences Department at Northwestern State University is dedicated to the development of students for roles in academic, leadership, professional, and research careers in the challenging fields of criminal justice, history, public safety, law, and public service. Utilizing transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research and service the department produces graduates equipped to be productive members of society and a driving force in the economic development and improvement of the overall quality of life in the region. The department delivers Bachelor of Arts degrees in Criminal Justice and History and Bachelors of Science degrees in Unified Public Safety Administration with concentrations in Law Enforcement Administration, Fire and Emergency Medical Services Administration, Emergency Management Administration, and Public Facilities Management. Certificate programs in Pre-Law and Paralegal Studies and Public Policy and Administration are also available

in addition to a Pre-law and Paralegal Studies concentration and minor. The department also delivers a Master's of Science degree in Homeland Security, and a Post-Master's Certificate in Global Security and Intelligence.

Homeland Security Program Mission Statement: From the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to the current National Security Strategy, students will gain a distinct appreciation for the complexities of homeland security organizations, leadership, policies, ethics, and challenges, through the review of pertinent literature, critical thinking, research, and reflective analysis and evaluation. The Master's Degree in Homeland Security is unique in that it pushes students to develop plausible solutions to the inexorable national, international, and transnational, threats currently challenging global security through the innovative delivery of transformative student learning experiences which prepare our graduates for life and career success in this ever growing occupational field.

Purpose (optional): The master's program will prepare students to engage in research from a cross-national and global perspective. It prepares students for entry positions in government and the private sector in which the ability to comprehend, influence, and respond to government policy from a national, international, and global security perspective is increasingly critical. It will also prepare interested students for the pursuit of further / additional advanced degrees in Homeland Security, Political Science, Strategic Leadership, or International Relations at other institutions.

Methodology: The assessment process for the MA/MS program is as follows:

(1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected and returned to the program coordinator;

(2) The program coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes;

(3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty;

(4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching core graduate courses if required (show cause);

(5) The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the HS Advisory Committee, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

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Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. First and second-semester students will be able to describe the historical evolution and context of early American domestic homeland security challenges from the establishment of the Department in 2002 through today's international and globalization challenges.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HS 5050: Homeland Security (**Foundational Course**)
HS 5000: International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime, and Covert Ops (**Foundational Course)**
HS 5650: International Security and Globalization (**Support Course**)

Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge)

On an annual basis, students enrolled in HS 5000,and HS 5050, required courses for HS Master's students, and HS 5650, a support course, will be administered their initial course exam containing a module of questions taken from a bank developed by a faculty committee and designed to evaluate the student's knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of Homeland Security from early America through current international and globalization challenges. Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students will be able to describe a basic understanding by scoring 70% or higher on the exam.

Findings.   **HS 5000** target not met. Only 72% of students achieved 70% or higher
HS 5050 target met. 77% of students achieved 70% or higher

Questions	1	3	5000	4	5	6	5000	8	9	11	13
HS 5000 – Score – # Students											
Fall – Exam 1 (14.28) x 11	10.71	9.3									
Fall – Final Exam (12.5)											
Spring – Exam 1 (14.28) x 13	11.4	10.28									
Spring – Final (12.5)											
HS 5050											
Fall – Exam 1 (6.67) x 5	6.36	4.37		6.23	6.50	4.89			6.34	6.03	6.46
Fall – Final (12.5)								9.14			
Spring – Exam 1 (6.67) X 8	6.32	3.89		5.3	6.56	5.3			6.18	5.72	5.82
Spring – Final (12.5)								6.41			

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Analysis. HS 5000 72% of students were able to successfully explain the historical evolution and context of early America domestic homeland security challenges from the establishment of the Department in 2002 through today's international and globalization challenges. However, in HS 5000, only slightly more than half (13) of the 24 students enrolled (Fall and Spring) were able to sufficiently grasp and express the context in which the Department of Homeland Security was established. This context should include the discussion that was taking place in America pertaining to the threat of terrorist attack (s) on the US homeland at that time. In addition, thirty percent (8) of the 24 were not able to address the expected components of question five on the final exam "Judgments about appropriate response to terrorism often reflects two criteria? What are they? Explain how the two criteria may conflict with each other." The average score for this population on question 5 of the final exam was 8.7 of the 12.5 possible, which is seventy percent (70%) of the possible points. When reviewing the critical thinking rubric the average score was 3.1, proficient. The module designed to establish foundational knowledge on the life cycle of the Department of Homeland Security should be revised. This block of instruction is currently composed of one lesson. There needs to be better integration and repetition of this module throughout the semester as opposed to only once.

Decision. For **HS 5000 -** Redesign/restructure the course module on the development of Homeland Security and increase the exposure of the students to the current and historical responses to terrorism. Integrate reviews of the key learning objectives throughout the course. We must look at restructuring the learning modules related to this SLO and adjust the evaluation of student learning by approaching this SLO in components in addition to enhancing the literature contained in the reading list for the courses to more fully immerse the students in the contextual knowledge required.

Analysis. HS 5050 Overall, 77% of students were able to describe the historical evolution and context of early America domestic homeland security challenges from the establishment of the Department in 2002 through today's international and globalization challenges. However, in HS 5050, none of the 13 students enrolled (Fall and Spring) were able to adequately describe the context in which the Department of Homeland Security was established nor the debate that was taking place in America concerning the threat of terrorist attack (s) on the US homeland at that time. In addition, twenty-five percent (3) of the 13 were not able to address the expected components of question eight on the final exam "Describe the historical evolution and context of early America domestic homeland security challenges to the establishment of the Department in 2002 through today's international and globalization challenges." The average score for this population on question 8 of the final exam was 7.8 of the 12.5 possible. Seventy percent (70%) being 8.7. When reviewing the critical thinking rubric the average score falls at 3.2, proficient. It appears that by having students approach this SLO in pieces as opposed to one complete questions results in much better scores. It also appears that module used to establish foundational knowledge on the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security needs to be relooked.

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This block of instruction is composed of one lesson. There needs to be better integration and repetition of this module throughout the semester as opposed to only once.

Decision. For **HS 5050 -** Redesign/restructure the course module on the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security and integrate reviews of the key learning objectives throughout the course. We must look at restructuring the learning modules related to this SLO and adjust the evaluation of student learning by approaching this SLO in components as opposed to holistically.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

Students will demonstrate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills through scenario-driven exercises in which they are required to analyze and develop a response to a homeland security situation. In this response, they must create a plan that contains relevant, justifiable, feasible, and actionable recommendations based on the information presented. Seventy (70%) of the students will score 12 or higher (max is 16) on the *Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric*

Dimension Assessed	Accomplished 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1
(Inquire) **Identify and define key issue/s and/or problem/s**	Clearly, accurately, and appropriately identifies key issue/s and/or problem/s.	Identifies most or all key issue/s and/or problem/s. Some minor inaccuracies or omissions may be present, but do not interfere with meaning.	Identifies some key issue/s and/or problem/s. May have some inaccuracies, omissions or errors present that interfere with meaning	Most or all of key issues/ and/or problem/s are not identified or defined, or are identified or defined inaccurately. Meaning is unclear.
(Analyze) **Present and Analyze Data/ Information**	Presents appropriate, sufficient and credible data/information. Clearly analyzes information for accuracy, relevance, and validity. Information clearly relates to meaning.	Presents sufficient and appropriate data/information. Generally analyzes data/information for accuracy, relevance and validity. Minor inaccuracies or omissions do not interfere with analysis or meaning.	Presents some appropriate data/information. May miss or ignore relevant data /information. Analysis is limited or somewhat inappropriate. May contain inaccuracies or omissions that interfere with analysis and/or meaning.	Does not present relevant and appropriate data/information. Fails to analyze, or uses inaccurate or inappropriate analysis of data/information. Copies information without analysis.

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(Evaluate) **Apply a Multi-Dimensional approach/ Consider context**	Clearly applies a multi- dimensional approach. Synthesizes various perspectives. Acknowledges limits of position or context.	Acknowledges multiple approaches. Some synthesis of perspectives. May not fully acknowledge limits of position or context, but is aware of limits or context.	Somewhat simplified position with some sense of multiple approaches. Minor or vague synthesis of perspectives. Some acknowledgement position may have limits. May not acknowledge context.	Student's position is grounded in a singular, often personal perspective. Position may be simplistic and obvious. Little or no awareness that position may have limits or context.
(Solve) **Demonstrate Sound Reasoning and Conclusions**	Reasoning is logical and creative, consistent, complete and often unique. Conclusion is complex and/or detailed, well supported, complete, relevant	Reasoning is mostly logical, complete, and consistent. Demonstrates some unique or creative insight. Conclusion is generally complete, supported, and mostly consistent and relevant	Reasoning contains elements of logic and/or creative insight, but not fully resolved. May have minor inconsistencies or omissions. Conclusion is relevant but abbreviated or simplified, not fully supported, and/or contains minor	Reasoning is illogical, simplistic, inconsistent or absent. Conclusion is simplistic and stated as an absolute, or inconsistent with evidence or reasoning. Lack of coherent or clear conclusion.

https://www.lanecc.edu/sites/default/files/assessment/ctrubric-w-12.pdf

Findings.　**HS 5000** - Target Met 100% of students scored 12 or higher on rubric
HS 5050 – Target Met. Of the thirteen (13) students enrolled in HS 5050, twelve scored above 70% and one score exactly 70%. Of the twelve that scored above 70 percent, the average score was 12 on the rubric.

HS 5000 Briefing Note Rubric Average Scores

Briefing Note	1	2	3	Average
Fall 2016 11 students	11.2 (70%)	12.6 (79%)	13.1 (82%)	35.9 (75%)
Spring 2017 13 students	12.5 (78%)	12.8 (80%)	15.5 (97%)	40.8 (85%)

Analysis. In **HS 5000** the students are assigned a series of briefing note assignments, based upon current events. The assignment utilizes the Department of Homeland Security briefing note format, which requires each student to create an analysis of the situation to include historical information on the problem, a series of recommended responses and an impact projection for each recommendation. In the Fall 16 semester,

the average rubric scores improved substantially from Briefing Note 1 to Briefing Note 2 (1.4 points) and moderately from Note 2 to Note 3 (.5 points) as the students got a better feel for how the process is designed to function and their exposure to knowledge increased. The Spring 17 semester scores initially were higher than the same assignment from the Fall 16 semester (12.5 / 11.2), a change that can be attributed to modification of the initial assignment instructions based on feedback from the students during the Fall 16 semester. A moderate rise between Notes 1 and 2 were surpassed by the change in rubric averages between Notes 2 and 3 (2.7 points) largely due to gains in points for element 2 (Analyze) and element 3 (Evaluate).

Decision. HS 5000 The target score needs to be increased to 80%, a rubric score of 12.8. The current, immediate nature of the scenarios often leads to the students initially responding in a more emotional, less nuanced way. As the semester progresses the students develop their ability to be more objective about the situation that they must analyze and are better able to formulate and support courses of action that reflect the goals of this SLO. Inclusion of activities designed to facilitate an earlier development of the objective detachment needed for this type of exercise will be introduced to the course.

Analysis. HS 5050 On a weekly basis in HS 5050, students are given three separate and distinct scenarios from which they are to choose one to answer. Their response is evaluated based on the completeness of their answer ensuring they address each component discussed during the particular learning module. Students became very adept at addressing each scenario but tended to follow the exact same sequence in responding that did not always reflect the best possible approach in comparison to the selected course of action. They tended to respond robotically to all natural disaster scenarios, in the same manner, man-made disasters and terrorist attacks all followed similar approaches.

Decision. HS 5050 The type of scenarios must be deviated in such a way that it forces students to develop a more independent, fact-based all-hazards approach. The current approach does not stress a student's imagination based on the foundational responsibilities of the Department of Homeland Security.

Measure 1.3. (Direct – Knowledge / Ability)

At the end of each semester, students enrolled in HS 5000 and HS 5050, foundational required courses for all HS Master's students, will be administered their final course exam. A module of questions taken from a bank developed by a faculty and designed to evaluate the student's knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of Homeland Security are included. Ninety (90%) of enrolled students will demonstrate a fundamental knowledge by scoring 90% or higher on the exam.

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Findings.   **HS 5000** – Target Not Met. 72% of students scored 90% or higher
HS 5050 – Target Met. 100% of students scored 90% or higher

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HS 5000 – Score – # Students							
Fall – Final Exam (12.5) x 11 Students	11.5	10	11.25	9.38	7.5	11.75	11.25
Spring – Final Exam (12.5) x 13 Students	11.25	11.38	11.75	10.75	10	11.88	12.50
	11.38	10.69	11.5	10.07	8.75	11.82	11.88

Analysis. The average score for all questions on the final essay exam is 10.87 out of 12.50 (87%). The lowest score was question 4 with an average score of 8.75. The question is scenario based ""Judgments about appropriate response to terrorism often reflects two criteria? What are they? Explain how the two criteria may conflict with each other." Most of the points were lost in the student's lack of detail in their explanation of the criteria. Although average scores reached the target, only 72% of the students were able to achieve a 90% or higher on the final examination.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HS 5050 – Score – # Students							
Fall – Final Exam (12.5) x 5 Students	12.50	11.47	12.02	9.89	10.88	11.90	12.50
Spring – Final Exam 1 (12.5) x 8 Students	12.50	12.03	11.41	10.94	11.72	12.50	12.50
	12.50	11.75	11.71	10.42	11.3	12.20	12.50

Analysis. The average score for all questions on the final essay exam is 11.76 out of 12.50 (94%). The lowest score was question 4 with an average score of 10.42. The question is scenario based "As has been seen in Chapter 14, the inability of differing emergency responders from various jurisdictions to communicate with each other has been a major problem. Even though the situation has improved over the last decade, problems still exist. What do you think are the primary obstacles to completely solving this issue? What do you think can be done to ensure that the differing responding agencies can at least communicate on a basic level during an emergency?" Most of the points were lost in the student's lack of detail in their specific recommendations.

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Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

SLO 2. Third-semester students will know the role and functions of the various agencies comprising DHS and the U.S. intelligence agencies in assessing foreign, domestic, and cyber threats, what counterterrorism strategies are in use to thwart terrorist aggression and the constitutional issues associated with these strategies.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

HS 5100: Venue and Event Security
HS 5150: Domestic Terrorism Prevention and Analysis
HS 5300: Constitutional Issues and Global Security
HS 5400: Network Security and Cyberterrorism
HS 5750: Homeland Security Policy Seminar

Measure: 2.1. **(Direct – knowledge)**

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from the required courses above will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using a standardized *research paper rubric* (attached). The papers and/or projects will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of homeland security policy, domestic and international trends in terrorism, the evolving nature of cyberspace, and how the homeland security associated laws affect the operations of law enforcement and intelligence operations. At least 80% of students sampled will score 75% or higher on the evaluation.

Findings. HS 5050 Target met 80% of students sampled scored 75% or higher on the evaluation.

Research Title	Rubric Score	Percentage Score (100)
Protest and Terror; Liberty and Justice	4	90
Are the conciliating communal reactions to militant extremism more damaging than the attacks themselves?	3	86
The United States Coast Guard: The "Step-Child" of the Armed Forces. What is the importance of the USCG falling under the DHS rather than the DoD?	3	88
The Thin Blue Line: First Step in Homeland Defense: Law Enforcement Policy	3	88

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Is there really a moral difference between what the terrorists do and what the United States has done throughout its formation as a superpower?	3	86
Technology as the true terrorist	4	96
Cybersecurity is one of Homeland Security greatest threat	2	75
The Declining Emphasis on National Security	4	96
International love or hate?	4	95
Why the border wall is the wrong way to secure the Southern American border	2	72
Immigrants and how they are protected by the Constitution	4	92
How the Media Impacts Terrorism	3	86
Is unrestricted warfare an applicable deterrent to future terrorism in line with the rationale that the losses in pursuing an unrestricted warfare policy would outweigh the losses associate with allowing terrorism to go unchecked.	3	82
Cyberspace and Terrorists: The New Battleground	4	96
America's Achilles Heel: Critical Infrastructure	4	95
Terrorism – More than just a tactic	3	84
AVERAGES	3.3	87.9

Analysis. HS 5050 A reasonable sample is taking two papers from Fall HS 5050 (5 x students total), three from Fall HS 5150 (10 x students total), four papers Fall 5750 (14 x students total), three from Spring HS 5050 (8 students total), two from Spring 5500 (8 x students total), and 2 from Spring 5750 (8 x students total). The average rubric score was 3.3, just above "meets standard". The average calculated score was 88.9, which would equate to a high B letter grade. The grade distribution was reasonable ranging from a low of 72 to a high of 96. The target was met in that 80% of students sampled scored 75% or higher on the evaluation.

Decision. **HS 5050** The target score needs to be increased to at least 80% of students sampled will score 90% or higher in order to push for continued improvement. Students will also be encouraged to enroll in English 3230, Technical Composition, or 3210 Advanced Composition to refine their writing skills.

Measure: 2.2. (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of each semester, the program will sample students with a survey, which will state: "In my homeland security courses I was provided a masters level of understanding of homeland security policy, strategy, threat assessment and trends, associated law and procedures, and how the various agencies interact across the spectrum of operations." Respondents will be able to respond with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. At least 85% of students will respond that they strongly agree or agree with the statement.

Findings. Target met – at least 85% of respondents agree with statements.

Analysis. Student responses to questions are consistently positive when queried about what they are learning and the applicability of the knowledge to their particular field. The data gathered to date has come from student feedback and questions included in end of semester exercises.

Decision. As part of our continuous improvement model, a formal survey instrument is under revision based upon feedback received from students and will be deployed beginning in Fall 2017. We will continue the process of rolling out our new survey and modify content as we gather data.

SLO 3. Fourth-semester students will demonstrate that they understand the current policies and procedures to mitigate, prevent and respond to a disaster, analyze and implement regimens for safety and risk reduction, the ethics of care and compassionate leadership, and the mechanisms for measuring all-hazards threat and recovery.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

HS 5200: Research Design and Methods in Homeland Security
HS 5350: Executive Leadership, Diplomacy, and Ethics in Homeland Security
HS 5500: Counter-Terrorism, Intel Analysis, and Advanced Criminal Investigations
HS 5550: Advanced Cyber-forensics and Cyberwarfare Issues
HS 5600: Managing Chaotic Organizations
HS 5700: Peace Studies, Conflict Transformation, and Global Security

Measure 3.1. (Indirect – Knowledge / Attitude)

At the end of the fourth semester, the department will sample students with a *performance survey*. One question on this survey will state: "The Homeland Security program at NSU has enabled me to conduct risk assessments, implement mitigations measures, navigate leadership challenges, and know the foundational concepts of the all-hazards approach to the emergency management process." Respondents will be able to respond with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. At least 85% of students will respond that they agree or strongly agree with the statement.

An online *survey* will be sent to a convenience sample of community partners who employ Homeland Security program students, asking them the degree to which they agree with the statement, "NSU HS graduates hired by you are able to recognize and articulate the foundational assumptions, central ideas and dominant criticisms of Homeland Security programs, strategies, and theories." Response choices will be, "strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree." At least 85% of community partners who will agree or strongly agree with that statement.

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Findings. Target met - at least 85% of respondents agree with statements.

Analysis.. Community partner responses to questions are consistently positive when asked about the knowledge base of graduates hired. The data gathered to date has largely come from informal interactions with these partners.

Decision. As part of our continuous improvement model, a formal survey instrument is being constructed based upon feedback received from community partners and will be deployed beginning in Fall 2017. We will continue the process of rolling out our new survey and modify content as we gather data.

Measure 3.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

Two or more faculty members will review position paper submissions by students using *Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric* (attached), in which they are required to analyze and respond to some aspect of Homeland Security, Policy, Strategy, or Leadership. The paper requires all students to demonstrate the capacity to critically analyze information in an objective manner and engage in the development, assessment, determination, compilation, and selection of a potential solution which best supports their position. At least 85% of projects, papers, and presentations evaluated will score 85% or higher.

Findings. HS 5200. Target met. Average of 17.5 (87.5%) on rubric scores

Analysis. Data are sparse at this time as the course has not been taught since Spring 2016. This course has undergone significant redesign in the previous two years to enhance both the process and the skills developed by the students. These changes have brought the course in line with common practices for methods courses in other disciplines and greatly enhanced the experience and the final research project for our students.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. As data is gathered going forward evaluation of measures and targets will be continue. From our prior experience, it is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

SLO 4. Students will demonstrate proficiency in evaluating and analyzing Homeland Security research and being able to frame their own research questions.

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Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

HS 5200: Research Design and Methods in Homeland Security
HS 5900: Graduate Seminar for Thesis Research and Writing Methods in HS

Measure 4.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

Eighty percent (80%) of students taking the comprehensive examination will demonstrate proficiency on Part I of the exam, which requires students to analyze and critique two foundational and standardized questions.

The evaluation is based on a skill assessment *Comprehensive Exam Rubric* (attached). The rubric consists of five skill assessment areas, which faculty grading the exam will score from zero (low proficiency/fail) to three (Accomplished proficiency). A score of 20 (10 points per question) and above on the rubric will demonstrate student proficiency on this part of the comprehensive exam.

The Graduate Program Coordinator will evaluate and report scores. Students will need a minimum score of 30 (10 points per question) to pass the three remaining questions focused on their specific areas of interest.

Findings. **HS 5900** Target met Average rubric score of 11.3 per question

Analysis. Overall scores have been Satisfactory with rubric values for individual questions ranging from 10 to 13 with an average of 11.3 (Comprehensive Examination Rubric attached) with deficiencies noted in element 4 (Citations of Relevant Research) and element 5 (Quality of Writing). As mentioned above, the HS program has undergone extensive revision over the previous two years. This includes both the content and assessment processes for the general exam. More data are needed as the comprehensive examination has been modified and the newer format and procedures have only been applied to the three completing students in Fall 2016 – Spring 17.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes. As discussed previously, the inclusion of an advanced writing course into the curriculum is proposed to address the overall issues with quality of writing throughout the program.

Measure 4.2. (Direct - Knowledge)

Ninety percent (90%) of thesis and non-thesis proposals will demonstrate student proficiency in developing research questions about political-security phenomena that

directly relate to and expand upon an existing theoretical body of knowledge.

At the conclusion of each thesis and non-thesis proposal, committee members will score the proposal using the *Thesis – Non-Thesis Assessment Rubric* (see attachment). The rubric consists of twelve skill assessment items, which the thesis committee members will score from low proficiency to highly proficiency. A cumulative score of 125 or more will demonstrate proficiency.

Findings. HS 5200. Target met. 100% of proposals have rubric score of at least 125

Paper-in-Lieu Proposal	Rubric Score	Percentage Score (100)
*Understanding the Impact and Potential of the Financial System in Reducing Terrorism and Improving Homeland Security	200	95
*An Evaluation of the Overuse of Force by Law Enforcement Could Be Viewed as Domestic Terrorism	125	80
*Historical Analysis of Homeland Security	125	80
Plausibility of a Successful Biological Terrorism Attack on a Post Facility Water Treatment Reservoir	205	98
AVERAGES	163.75	88.25

Analysis. This course has undergone significant redesign in the previous two years to enhance both the process and the skills developed by the students. The primary difference in the current course design is that the final paper is now the research proposal for the PIL / Thesis. This change has brought the course in line with common practices for methods courses in other disciplines and has greatly enhanced the experience and the final research project for our students.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. As data is gathered going forward evaluation of measures and targets will be continue. From our prior experience, it is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Measure 4.3. (Direct - Knowledge)

Ninety percent (90%) of student thesis and or non-thesis papers will use the most appropriate methodology for the research question/hypotheses addressed. At the

conclusion of each thesis proposal, committee members will score the submission utilizing the *Thesis – Non-Thesis Assessment Rubric* (see attachment). The rubric consists of twelve skill assessment items, which the thesis committee members will score from low proficiency to highly proficient. A score of 125 or higher will demonstrate proficiency. The Program Coordinator will evaluate and report scores.

Findings. HS 5200 Target met average rubric score 163.75

Paper-in-Lieu Title	Rubric Score	Percentage Score (100)
*Understanding the Impact and Potential of the Financial System in Reducing Terrorism and Improving Homeland Security	200	95
*An Evaluation of the Overuse of Force by Law Enforcement Could Be Viewed as Domestic Terrorism	125	80
*Historical Analysis of Homeland Security	125	80
Plausibility of a Successful Biological Terrorism Attack on a Post Facility Water Treatment Reservoir	205	98
AVERAGES	163.75	88.25

Analysis. As with all written work submitted, writing skills are those most in need of improvement. Due to the small number of students who have reached this point in their program of study for the 2016-17 timeframe more robust analysis is not possible. For establishing a baseline, papers from Spring 2016 are included in the analysis and are indicated by an asterisk.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes. The changes to HS 5200 have resulted in improvement in the PIL/Thesis documents.

SLO 5. Students will demonstrate appropriate communication skills.
Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

HS 5900: Graduate Seminar for Thesis Research and Writing Methods in HS.

Measure 5.1. (Direct - Skill)

Eighty percent (80%) of students will demonstrate proficient written communication skills. Student thesis and non-thesis research papers will be used to evaluate their written communication skills by rating the quality of the writing on the *Thesis – Non-Thesis Assessment Rubric* (see attachment). Numerous components will measure written communications skills on a scale from low proficiency to high proficiency.

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Proficiency will be demonstrated by a combined score of at least 94 on sections 1-4, 7 - 9, and 11 of the rubric.

Findings. HS 5900 Target met. Average rubric score of 123.25

Paper-in-Lieu Title	Rubric Score	Percentage Score (100)
*Understanding the Impact and Potential of the Financial System in Reducing Terrorism and Improving Homeland Security	143	95
*An Evaluation of the Overuse of Force by Law Enforcement Could Be Viewed as Domestic Terrorism	105	70
*Historical Analysis of Homeland Security	98	65
Plausibility of a Successful Biological Terrorism Attack on a Post Facility Water Treatment Reservoir	147	98
AVERAGES	123.25	82

Analysis. As with all written work submitted, writing skills are those most in need of improvement. Due to the small number of students who have reached this point in their program of study for the 2016-17 timeframe more robust analysis is not possible. For establishing a baseline, papers from Spring 2016 are included in the analysis and are indicated by an asterisk. The changes to HS 5200 have resulted in improvement in the PIL/Thesis documents.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Measure 5.2. (Direct - Knowledge)

Eighty percent (80%) of graduates will demonstrate proficiency in oral communication skills. Thesis and non-thesis defenses – presentation will be used to evaluate students' oral communication skills by rating the quality of the presentations on *Thesis – Non-Thesis Assessment Rubric* (see attachment). Sections 1-4, 7 - 9, and 11 of the rubric will also measure oral communication skills on a scale of low proficiency to high proficiency. Proficiency will be demonstrated by a combined score of at least 94 on sections 1-4, 7 - 9, and 11 of the rubric.

Findings. HS 5900 Target met. Average rubric score of 123.25

Paper-in-Lieu Title	Rubric Score	Percentage Score (100)

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

*Understanding the Impact and Potential of the Financial System in Reducing Terrorism and Improving Homeland Security	143	95
*An Evaluation of the Overuse of Force by Law Enforcement Could Be Viewed as Domestic Terrorism	105	70
*Historical Analysis of Homeland Security	98	65
Plausibility of a Successful Biological Terrorism Attack on a Post Facility Water Treatment Reservoir	147	98
AVERAGES	123.25	82

Analysis. Due to the small number of students who have reached this point in their program of study for the 2016-17 timeframe more robust analysis is not possible. The changes to HS 5200 have resulted in improvement in the PIL/Thesis process.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Comprehensive summary of key findings and decisions.

For the 2016-2017 academic year, the Homeland Security MA program assessment committee examined 12 measures for five Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and the findings are as follows. The targets for ten of the measures were met. Two targets were not. The two targets that were not met (SLO 1 Measures 1.1 and 1.3 for HS 5000) yielded mixed results in that target scores were achieved but by an insufficient number of students in the courses.

We are excited that the program-wide changes that have taken place in the previous three years, in personnel, curricula, and procedures have had demonstrably positive effects on student learning. Courses have been, and continue to be, redesigned and updated and the methods of delivery of instruction have been revamped. We are working to add an advanced writing course to the curriculum to address the most common weakness across all SLOs, our student's writing skills.

Going forward the decisions made include modifying the course modules for HS 5000 and HS 5050 in measure 1.1 to address deficiencies in student's contextual knowledge highlighted by our analysis. No changes are proposed at this time for HS 5000 in regard to Measure 1.3, monitoring will continue to evaluate the effects of the changes to course modules on outcomes.

We will be raising the target rubric scores for Measure 1.2 from 12 (75%) to 12.8 (80%). We are making this change based upon the 100% achievement of the initial target by students. We must raise to bar to move forward with the continuous improvement model that we employ.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

All other measures and targets will remain in their current form pending the outcome of our 2017-18 assessment

We will be deploying our new surveys to the students and community partners in Fall 2017 and are eager to gather more data to allow us to move forward with program improvement to enhance the educational experiences for our students and ensure that they are meeting the needs of our community partners.

Summary of Findings

SLO 1

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

1.1   **HS 5000** target not met. Only 72% of students achieved 70% or higher
         HS 5050 target met. 77% of students achieved 70% or higher

1.2   **HS 5000** - Target met. 100% of students scored 75% or higher
         HS 5050 – Target Met. Of the thirteen (13) students enrolled in HS 5050, twelve scored above 70% and one score exactly 70%. Of the twelve that scored above 70 percent, the average score was 12 on the rubric.

1.3   **HS 5000** – Target Not Met. 72% of students scored 90% or higher
         HS 5050 – Target Met. 100% of students scored 90% or higher

SLO 2

2.1   **HS 5050** Target met 80% of students sampled scored 75% or higher on the evaluation.

2.2   Target met – at least 85% of respondents agree with statements.

SLO 3

3.1   Target met – at least 85% of respondents agree with statements.

3.2   **HS 5200**. Target met. Average of 17.5 (87.5%) on rubric scores

SLO 4

4.1   **HS 5900** Target met Average rubric score of 11.3 per question

4.2   **HS 5200**. Target met. 100% of proposals have rubric score of at least 125

4.3   **HS 5200** Target met average rubric score 163.75

SLO 5

5.1   **HS 5900** Target met. Average rubric score of 123.25

5.2   **HS 5900** Target met. Average rubric score of 123.25