

Assessment Cycle AC 2022-2023

Scholars College Liberal Arts (BA) (820)

College: Arts and Sciences

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Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. 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 unequalled 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.

Louisiana Scholars' College Mission Statement: The College's mission is to provide a quality, customized, undergraduate education firmly grounded in the liberal arts and sciences to a diverse population of well-qualified, highly motivated students by rethinking the traditional liberal arts curriculum and developing innovative approaches to honors education.

Louisiana Scholars' College Purpose: As an academic unit, the Louisiana Scholars' College is responsible for:

- administering, delivering, and enhancing courses for the honors core curriculum (the Common Curriculum), which replaces the University Core for students in the College.
- administering, setting standards, delivering, and enhancing courses for the Minor in Liberal Arts and the individualized Major in Liberal Arts and its honors concentrations: Classical Studies; Fine and Performing Arts; Foreign Languages;

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Humanities and Social Thought; Philosophy, Politics, and Economics; Business, Technology and Society; and Scientific Inquiry.

- collaborating with other departments to offer joint honors versions of 26 traditional majors, each to include the Common Curriculum, a senior thesis, and honors level major courses, as appropriate in addition to the required courses in each major.
- mentoring students individually in the production of the senior thesis.
- advising all honors students on curricular choices to prepare them for advanced study or employment.

Students completing a concentration in the major in Liberal Arts use a combination of courses offered in the Scholars' College and approved courses offered in other departments or through study abroad.

Due to the variety of degree options in the College and the flexibility of the major in Liberal Arts, sample sizes are too small for a meaningful evaluation of Student Learning Outcomes related to specific content imparted in any of these majors. (SLOs related to content in specific joint majors are evaluated in the home departments.) The following assessment evaluates skills-based student learning outcomes common to the major in Liberal Arts and all the joint majors administered by the College as demonstrated in courses offered in the College.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

1. evaluation of components of single assignments in courses required of all students in the College.
2. evaluation of the comprehensive final exam in skills-based courses satisfying options in the Common Curriculum.
3. summative evaluation of the Senior Thesis defense.
4. summative evaluation of the Archival Senior Thesis.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. Demonstrate effective oral communication skills.

Through first semester presentation and Thesis Defense.

Measure 1.1. (Direct–Skill/Ability–oral communication)

Students make oral presentations of their term papers in SCRT 181W and the 2000-level co-classes, which are assessed using the AACU *Oral Communication* rubric. The target is for a minimum of 75% of students to earn an average rating of 3 or higher.

Finding: Target not met

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Analysis: In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. In AC 2021-2022, the target was for a minimum of 75% of students in SCRT 181W and the 2000-level co-courses to earn an average rating of 3 or higher on the 4-point AACU *Oral Communication* rubric. The assessment covered 25 students. Based on the rubric, 75% or more of students scored a 3 or 4 on four of five subscales: *Organization* (88%), *Language* (84%), *Delivery* (76%), and *Central Message* (80%). Only 18 of 25 students met the target on *Supporting Materials* (72%). Overall, only 64% of students averaged a 3 or above on all of the 5 subscales, with this group all meeting the standard by scoring only 3s and 4s. This indicates that lower subscores were concentrated in relatively few students rather than spread throughout the class. The overall results did not differ significantly from the 2020-2021 proportion meeting the target (Two proportion z-test, $p = .119$).

Based on the analysis of these results in AC 2022-2023, to further improve presentations, the faculty offered a workshop experience for presentations so students could benefit from peer review, begin to develop their presentations earlier in the semester and thus have time to make revisions. This change was specifically targeted at improving the students' delivery of oral presentations.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was for a minimum of 75% of students in SCRT 181W and the 2000-level co-courses to earn an average rating of 3 or higher on the 4-point AACU *Oral Communication* rubric.

The assessment covered 24 students. Based on the rubric, 37% of students averaged a score of 3 or higher on all subscales: *Organization* (62.5%), *Language* (62.5%), *Delivery* (50%), *Support* (62.5%), *Central Message* (62.5%). Overall, 37.5% of students averaged a 3 or above on all 5 subscales indicating that the higher scores were concentrated in a smaller number of individuals. Several possibilities as to why the target was not met present themselves external to the pedagogy of the courses. Considering lower enrollments across NSU and in the Scholars' College generally, admissions standards were relaxed, resulting in a more challenging learning environment. Additionally, the College had two new faculty teaching in SCRT and its 2000-level co-courses who had limited experience assessing in tandem with their senior colleagues.

Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of AC 2022-2023 and to drive the cycle of improvement, enrollments and admissions standards for AC 2023-2024 have been addressed. The faculty will make the following changes: before assessing oral presentations, faculty will meet to discuss and calibrate their approaches to assessment.

Measure 1.2. (Direct–Skill/Ability–oral communication)

Students present oral defenses of their theses which are assessed using the summative rubric for the department, modified in Spring 2017. The target is for a minimum of 75% of students enrolled in the second semester of thesis to progress to the point where they can defend their work and earn a rating of *very good* or higher. Each rating is

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based on specific levels of performance, with examples given in a departmental rubric. Each defense is rated by the first and second readers as well as the Director of the College. Students who are enrolled but do not successfully defend are rated *unsatisfactory*.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Of the 15 students enrolled in the second semester of thesis in spring 2022, 14 defended that semester; all of these (100%) scored 3.0 or higher for their defenses. One student did not complete their project. This reduced the proportion of students earning a *very good* or higher to 14 of 15 (93%). By this point students were much more comfortable with virtual presentations. Those enrolled on campus used a hybrid mode with a face-to-face presentation which was recorded and live streamed so more people could attend; a handful of students who were off campus at jobs or internships presented virtually. The QEP rubric, which uses 11 items to assess two SLOs for the capstone experience, did not indicate any areas of weakness; however, the Director assessment was only completed for two students because the position was vacant during the assessment.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty decided to focus on individual coaching on presentation skills prior to the defense in AC 2022-2023. In addition, more intense recruiting was to be used to encourage students to make conference presentations. During this assessment cycle, 3 students (27%) made presentations of their thesis work prior to their thesis defenses at the ULL Undergraduate Research Conference (2), and the American Chemical Society regional conference (1). NSU's Research Day and the University of Louisiana System Academic Summit occurred after the defense deadline. These changes were to improve the students' ability to complete work at a professional level in a timely manner and to communicate that work effectively to a generally educated audience. As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was a minimum of 75% of students enrolled in the second semester of thesis to progress to the point where they can defend their work and earn a rating of *very good* or higher.

Of the 11 students enrolled in the second semester of thesis in spring 2023, 11 defended their theses in the spring semester; of these, 6 (55%) averaged 3.0 or higher for their defenses. 8 (73%) averaged a *Very Good* or higher. The average SLO subscore was a 3.0 or higher in every instance.

This cohort included one student in the Accelerated Master's Program; students in this program no longer complete an undergraduate thesis, using their master's thesis to satisfy this requirement.

Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target not met. There was a minimum of 75% of students enrolled in the second semester of thesis to progress to the point where they can defend their work and earn a rating of *Very Good* or higher. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results and to drive the cycle of improvement, the faculty will harden deadlines in SHUM/SBUS/SSCI/SFA 480T and 482T to encourage revision of

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the thesis and provide opportunity for practice of the presentation. In addition, faculty mentors will continue to offer individual coaching on presentation skills prior to the defense in AC 2023-2024. Special attention will also be given to students struggling to meet thesis deadlines in the spring semester. Seniors will be encouraged to make presentations of their thesis work in progress at both undergraduate and professional conferences, including the ULL Undergraduate Research Conference, the University of Louisiana System Academic Summit, and NSU's Research Day.

These changes will improve the students' ability to complete work at a professional level in a timely manner and to communicate that work effectively in presentations to a generally educated audience.

SLO 2. Demonstrate effective written communication skills.

Through first semester term paper and Archival Thesis Submission

Measure 2.1 (Direct–Skill/Ability–written communication)

Students write 4,000-word term papers in SCRT 181W and the 2000-level co-courses, which are assessed using the AACU *Written Communication* rubric. The target is for a minimum of 75% of students to earn a rating of 3 or higher on each individual subscale and on the average of the five subscales.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis: The target for AC 2021-2022 was met. In AC 2021-2022, the target was for 75% of students to score 3 or higher on each individual subscale and on the average of the five subscales. The individual component target was not met. The best performance occurred on *Context and Purpose*, where only 17 of 25 students tested (68%) scored 3 or higher. Student performance on *Sources and Evidence* and *Control of Syntax and Mechanics*, was slightly lower, with 16 of 25 (64%) scoring 3 or higher. The weakest areas were *Genre and Disciplinary Conventions* (only 52% scored 3 or higher) and *Content Development* (48% scored 3 or higher). Overall, 11 of 25 students (44%) had an average score of 3 or more across the 5 subscales, indicating that lower scores were distributed throughout the class. A change in faculty teaching the course may have resulted in part of the decline; in AC 2020-2021, all students in one subtitle (38% of the students assessed) received a 4 on all subcomponents; in AC 2021-2022, only 2 students, in different classes, scored as high. Faculty may have been more aware of the fact that these scores will be compared to scores on the thesis in the future.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty determined to widen their focus and add a compilation of the most common syntax and usage errors in the previous and current course to guide workshop discussion and exercises. In addition, all students scoring lower than an A (90%) on the first major writing assignment (prior to midterm grades) were to meet with their professor to discuss how they could improve in

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the five assessment categories. These changes were to improve the students' ability to write more effectively for an audience in their discipline.

As a result of these changes, the target for AC 2022-2023 was for 75% of students to score 3 or higher on each individual subscale and on the average of the five subscales. Nine (9) out of 24 students (37.5%) averaged a 3.0 or higher on each subscale. Fifty-four percent (54%) of individual subscales scored at 3.0 or higher. The best performance occurred in *Context of and Purpose for Writing* with 18 out of 24 (75%) scoring a 3.0 or higher. The weakest area was *Genre and Disciplinary Conventions* (only 50% scored a 3 or higher), continuing the trend from AC 2021-2022.

Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. The target for 75% of students to score 3 or higher on each individual subscale and on the average of the five subscales. The same caveats about admissions and new faculty apply here as in the discussion of SLO 1.1. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results and to drive the cycle of improvement, the faculty will discuss and calibrate their assessment methodology. They will also explicitly address genre and disciplinary conventions in their assignments. These changes will improve the students' ability to write more effectively for an audience in their discipline.

Measure 2.2 (Direct–Skill/Ability–written communication)

Students will submit the archival copies of their written theses which will also be assessed using an established rubric. The target is for a minimum of 70% of students to earn a rating of *Excellent* or higher.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Ten (10) of 11 (91%) completed theses that were rated reached this standard, significantly higher than in AC 2020-2021 ($p = .015$). Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, in AC 2022-2023, the faculty intended to move to the AACU *Written Communication* rubric so that comparisons could more easily be made to identify whether students are improving in areas where they did

Rating of Archival Copy 2022-2023			
1 st Reader	2nd Reader	1 st Reader	2nd Reader
Superlative	Superlative	Good	Very Good
Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Superlative	Superlative	Good	Good
Superlative	Superlative	Excellent	Excellent
Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good
Good	Satisfactory		

less well during their first semester.

In AC 2022-2023 the faculty did not move to the AACU *Written Communication* rubric. The previous rubric continued in use.

In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met, with 7 of 11 (64%) students averaging *Excellent* or higher on the archival thesis, although the sample size is small.

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Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. Students had unusual difficulty meeting the assignment deadlines. Based on the analysis of AC 2022-2023 and to drive the cycle of improvement, in AC 2023-2024 the faculty will re-introduce more incremental time deadlines for the AC 2023-2024 cohort. Time management problems will continue to be addressed in SLSC 4000 and in the thesis methods course.

SLO 3. Question, analyze, evaluate, and reconcile conflicting perspectives.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

SCTT 1820: Texts and Traditions II: The Shaping of Western Thought

Measure: 3.1. (Direct – knowledge)

The final exam in Texts and Traditions II: The Shaping of Western Thought (SCTT 1820) includes an essay relating the perspectives of one or more major figures from the course to modern perspectives. The target is that 75% of students will earn an average of a B or better on this final exam essay.

Finding: In AC 2021-2022, this measure was not assessed. Based on discussion with Texts and Traditions faculty, it was decided that the metric does not accurately capture the work being done in the course. Considering these discussions, Measure 3.1 has been revised as follows:

Measure 3.1 (Direct – knowledge) revised Spring 2023

The final exam in Texts and Traditions II: The Shaping of Western Thought (SCTT 1820) includes an essay relating the students' antecedent perspectives on the course theme to at least two perspectives they encountered in their reading and discussion that they found novel or surprising. Students are asked to reflect concretely on how this encounter affected their perspectives. The target is that 75% of students will earn an average of a B or better on this final exam essay.

Finding: Target met. Of 16 students represented in the assessment, 13 (82%) scored a B or better on the essay.

Analysis: This new measure was not in place in AC 2021-2022. In AC 2022-2023, the students did well in vocalizing their perspectives on the essay. Eighty-two percent (82%) of students scored a B or better, and, therefore, our target was met.

Decision: In AC 2023-2024, the revised Measure 3.1 will be used again; the essay will be assessed with the AACU Values rubric for Critical Thinking with a target of 75% of students earning an average of 3.0 or better.

SLO 4. Demonstrate quantitative and problem-solving skills.

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Course Map: Tied to course syllabi below.

Applied Statistics (SSTA 3810-01N) and Applied Calculus 1 (SMAT 2000)

Measure 4.1. (Direct – skill/ability)

In the core mathematics course, Applied Statistics (SSTA 3810-01N), 75% of students will earn a B or better on a comprehensive assessment of their knowledge and skills. The course's final assessment is a comprehensive evaluation of basic descriptive statistics, fundamental hypothesis testing, and advanced topics; analyses are completed in Excel. Students choose and perform the appropriate analyses and interpret their results in the context of the problems.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met; 15 of 16 students (93.8%) scored 80% or better on the final.

SSTA 3810 Final Exam 2022-2023		
score	freq	%
< 140	1	9%
140-149	1	9%
150-159	2	18%
160-169	1	9%
170-179	4	36%
180-189	0	0%
190-200	2	18%
total	11	

Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. In addition to emphasizing the importance of completing the sample exams on time, the grading scale will count all four sample exams in the final grade. In addition, since difficulty on the ANOVA project (which is not included on the final) is also related to lower performance on the final, additional support will be provided to students who score below 90% on the project.

In AC 2022-2023, the target remained for 75% of students to earn a score of 80% or better on the comprehensive final exam. Seven (7) of 11 students (64%) performed at the desired level. Two students scored 79% which would have raised performance to the target. Although students completed more of their assignments, most of these were done too late to receive feedback before submission.

Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. The target was for 75% of students to earn a score of 80% or better on the comprehensive final exam. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In addition to emphasizing the importance of completing the sample exams on time and counting all four sample exams in the final grade, quizzes will be added to encourage students to complete their out of class work earlier.

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Measure 4.2. (Direct – skill/ability)

In the core mathematics courses, Applied Calculus 1 (SMAT 2000) and Applied Calculus 2 (SMAT 2010), 75% of students will earn a B or better on a comprehensive assessment of their knowledge and skills.

Finding: Target not met for SMAT 2000; target met for SMAT 2010

Analysis: In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met in either SMAT 2000 or SMAT 2010. The incoming class was much smaller than normal and only 3 students completed each of the target courses, so it was impossible to satisfy the goal unless all students met the standard. In both courses only 1 of 3 students met the standard (33%).

Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. WebEx recordings were made in SMAT 2000 when the class covered problematic topics where students needed more than a single lecture to retain the material. Additional in class problem solving in small groups was used to test immediate understanding of new topics. Although changes were planned for SMAT 2010 only a single student was enrolled so difficulties were addressed immediately.

As a result of these changes in AC 2022-2023, the target was for 75% of students in SMAT 2000 and SMAT 2010 to earn a B or better on the comprehensive final. Three of the eight students SMAT 2000 met the standard (38%). In SMAT 2010 the single student did exceptionally well and met the standard.

Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target was for 75% of students in SMAT 2000 and SMAT 2010 to earn a B or better on the comprehensive final. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results, the faculty will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. In both courses, WebEx recordings will be created when the class covers problematic topics where students may need more than a single lecture to retain the material. Additional in class problem solving in small groups will also be used to test immediate understanding of new topics. These changes will improve the students' ability to apply concepts correctly in novel situations, making the course more effective and pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

SLO 5. Identify connections within and between the sciences, mathematics, humanities, and the arts.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

SCTT 2820 – Texts and Traditions IV; SLSC 4000 – Thesis Research Methods

Measure 5.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

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In SCTT 2820 (*Texts and Traditions IV*), students will make connections within and between the sciences, mathematics, humanities, and the arts in a summative essay assignment, using works from throughout all four courses in the Texts and Traditions sequence, courses required of all students. The target is that 75% of students will earn an average score of 3.0 or better using the AACU Values rubric for *Inquiry and Analysis*.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis: In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. Examining each rubric item individually, at least 60% earned a 3 or better on all six items. The best performance was on *Limitations and Implications*, with 28% scoring a 4 and 52% scoring a 3. Students also met the target on the rubric item *Design Process* (76% scored 3 or above). The worst performance was on *Existing Knowledge, Research, or Views*, with 36% earning a 4 and 24% earning a 3.

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023. Greater emphasis was placed on student presentations with the aim of promoting critical thinking and communication skills. More stress was placed for example on the location, analysis, and effective juxtaposition of appropriate secondary sources. As a result of these changes in AC 2022-2023, the target was for 75% of students to earn an average score of 3.0 or better using the AACU Values rubric for *Inquiry and Analysis*. Examining each rubric item individually, only 31% earned a 3 or better on all six items; the best performances occurred on *Topic Selection, Design Process, Conclusions, and Limitations and Implications*, all of which had 9 of 13 (69%) score 3 or 4. The worst performance was on *Analysis*, with only 6 of 13 (46%) earning a 3 or 4.

Not all students were assessed, which may have affected the results. In addition, due to weather disruptions in the spring schedule, less attention may have been devoted to this assessment. It seems unlikely that the curricular changes may have resulted in a lowering of performance between AC 2021-2022 and AC 2022-2023.

Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of AC 2022-2023 and to drive improvement in AC 2023-2024, the faculty will provide additional guidance on how students can make connections for themselves. Clearer instructions will be given in writing for the final essay in terms of specific expectations for an “A level performance” to help students more clearly articulate their research questions and produce works of appropriate (and typically, narrower) scope.

Measure 5.2. (Direct – Knowledge)

Through the final presentation and proposal, students will be assessed on their ability to formulate connections as stated in the SLO. Seventy-five percent (75%) of students will earn an average of a B or better on the presentation and final proposal.

Finding: Target met

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Analysis: In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. One student failed to attend for most of the semester and did not submit any work for the course; this student was excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 14 students, 11 (79%) earned an average of a B or better on the proposal (20 points) and presentation (5 points). All students scored 82% or higher on the oral presentation.

SLSC 4000/SBUS 4000 Presentation and Proposal Spring 2022		
score	#	freq.
< 50%	1	17%
50-59%	0	0%
60-69%	0	0%
70-79%	0	0%
80-89%	2	33%
90-100%	3	50%
total	6	

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, the faculty made the following changes in AC 2022-2023. Students were required to consult with their first reader and identify commonalities between the disciplines in terms of research components and the interconnectedness of scholarship across the disciplines.

As a result of these changes in AC 2022-2023, the target was for 75% of students to earn an average of 80% or better on the final proposal and presentation. One student failed to attend for most of the semester and did not submit any work for the course; this student was excluded from the analysis. Of the remaining 6 students, 5 (83%) earned an average of a B or better on the proposal

(20 points) and presentation (5 points).

Decision: In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2022-2023 and to drive improvement in AC 2023-2024, the faculty will more clearly emphasize the importance of an interdisciplinary approach. A new assignment will be added to SLSC/SBUS 4000 in which students will document their meeting with their first reader with a brief reflection on strategies for including an interdisciplinary component in their thesis. This reflection will be assessed using the AACU Values rubric for *Inquiry and Analysis* which will allow us to look for improvement between the sophomore (SCTT 2820) and junior years.

Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvement based on analysis of results. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2022-2023. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results.

In SLO 1, Measure 1.2, a heavier emphasis was placed on presentation skills prior to the defense and more intense recruiting was done to encourage students to make conference presentations. This helped to produce SLO subscores which were 3.0 or higher in every instance.

In SLO 3, Measure 3.1, a revision of learning and assignment objectives produced a significant improvement in student performance on final essay exams in which 82% scored a B or better.

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In SLO 4, Measure 4.1, students continued to perform at targeted levels. In SMAT 2010, the results were exceptional although the small class size made it difficult to draw any statistically valid conclusions.

In SLO 5, Measure 5.2, new policies which required students to consult with their first reader and identify commonalities between the disciplines led to a strong improvement in performance with 83% of students earning an average of a B or better on their thesis proposals and presentations.

Curricular and instructional changes in AC 2022-2023

SLO 1. Demonstrate effective oral communication skills: To further improve presentations the faculty offered a workshop experience for presentations so students could benefit from peer review, begin to develop their presentations earlier in the semester and thus have time to make revisions. This change was specifically targeted at improving the student's delivery of oral presentations.

The faculty also decided to focus on individual coaching on presentation skills prior to the defense. In addition, more intense recruiting was to be used to encourage students to make conference presentations. These changes were to improve the students' ability to complete work at a professional level in a timely manner and to communicate that work effectively to a generally educated audience.

SLO 2. Demonstrate effective written communication skills: The faculty determined to widen their focus and add a compilation of the most common syntax and usage errors in the previous and current course to guide workshop discussion and exercises. In addition, all students scoring lower than an A (90%) on the first major writing assignment (prior to midterm grades) were to meet with their professor to discuss how they can improve in the five assessment categories.

SLO 3. Question, analyze, evaluate, and reconcile conflicting perspectives: Faculty added an essay which required students to relate earlier perspectives on the course theme to at least two perspectives they encountered in their reading and discussion that they found novel or surprising.

SLO 4. Demonstrate quantitative and problem-solving skills: In addition to emphasizing the importance of completing the sample exams on time, the grading scale was revised to count all four sample exams in the final grade. Additional support was also provided to students who scored below 90% on the ANOVA project. WebEx recordings were made in SMAT 2000 when the class covered problematic topics where students needed more than a single lecture to retain the material. Additional in class problem solving in small groups was used to test immediate understanding of new topics.

SLO 5. Identify connections within and between the sciences, mathematics, humanities, and the arts: Students were required to consult with their first reader and identify commonalities between the disciplines in terms of research components and the interconnectedness of scholarship across the disciplines.

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Plan of action moving forward

Overall, two changes have been initiated to make assessments of all SLOs more uniform between sections. First, assessment artifacts are being collected through Teams for easier analysis and comparisons through the educational paths of each cohort. Secondly, faculty training will be instituted to encourage more uniform assessment of individual items.

In addition, enrollment in this program has increased for AC 2023-2024, which should increase the resolution of individual measures and allow for more meaningful statistical comparisons.

SLO 1. Before assessing oral presentations, faculty will meet to discuss and calibrate their approaches to assessment. Targets for the thesis defense will be evaluated taking into consideration the reduction in the number of students completing the undergraduate thesis due to the accelerated master's programs. Master's theses may be included in future assessments.

SLO 2. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results, the faculty will discuss and calibrate their assessment methodology. They will also explicitly address genre and disciplinary conventions in their assignments. These changes will improve the student's ability to write more effectively for an audience in their discipline.

SLO 3. This assessment and target will be calibrated to the new rubric (AACU Critical Thinking) to allow for a more comprehensive assessment of student achievement in mastering the analysis of primary sources.

SLO 4. In addition to emphasizing the importance of completing the sample exams on time and counting all four sample exams in the final grade, quizzes will be added to encourage students to complete their out of class work earlier. WebEx recordings will be created when the class covers problematic topics where students may need more than a single lecture to retain the material. Additional in class problem solving in small groups will also be used to test immediate understanding of new topics.

SLO 5. Clearer instructions will be given in writing for the final essay in terms of specific expectations for an "A level performance", to help students more clearly articulate their research questions and produce works of appropriate (and typically, narrower) scope. To emphasize the importance of an interdisciplinary approach more clearly, in AC 2023-2024, a new assignment will be added to SLSC/SBUS 4000 in which students will document their meeting with their first reader with a brief reflection on strategies for including an interdisciplinary component in their thesis.