Unified Public Safety Administration 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. 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.

Unified Public Safety Administration Mission Statement: Develop students in gaining an appreciation for the complexities of homeland security organizations, leadership, policies, ethics, and challenges, through the review of pertinent literature, critical and synthetic thinking, research, and reflective analysis and assessment. The Bachelor's Degree in Homeland Security is unique in that it teaches students how to develop plausible resolutions to the risks and threats currently challenging emergency response personnel through the innovative delivery of transformative student learning experiences preparing graduates for life and career success in this expanding occupational field of emergency management in the public and private sectors. Courses are designed with the present and future administrator or leader in mind having direct application to the challenges of emergency management.

Purpose (optional): The Unified Public Safety Administration program will prepare students to students for entry positions and enhancement of positions currently held to leadership positions of greater responsibility in government and the private sector in which the ability to comprehend, influence, create and respond to government public safety policies from national, state and local levels in this region. It will also prepare interested students for the pursuit of further / additional advanced degrees in Homeland Security, Political Science or Strategic Leadership, at this or other institutions.

Methodology: The assessment process for the UPSA program is as follows:

(1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected by 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 and department head;

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

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

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. First and second year students will be able to describe the historical issues, evolution and context of early America domestic homeland security challenges hazards risks and resources in present public safety preparedness and responses.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

UPSA 2400: Introduction to Corporate and Municipal Emergency Management
UPSA 2550: Hazards Risk Assessment Methods
UPSA 2700: Planning and Decision Making in Public Organizations
UPSA 4700: Event and Venue Security

Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge)

On an annual basis, students enrolled in UPSA 2400, UPSA 2550 and UPSA 2700, all required courses for UPSA students, will complete course assignments designed to evaluate the student's knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, challenges and applications of emergency management principles. 75% of enrolled students will be able to describe a basic understanding by scoring 70% or higher on the assignments of the course. Weekly worksheets from the three courses will be used in this determination. Risk Assessment Exercises from UPSA 2550 and Weekly Scenario Exercises from UPSA 2700 are used to measure application of emergency management principles using the same metric.

Findings: Target Met

UPSA 2400: Introduction to Corporate and Municipal Emergency Management

Data was not available for this course.

UPSA 2550: Hazards Risk Assessment Methods

For Fall 2016, course was offered with using an online delivery platform. Students with an average for all course assignments over 70% was 100 %, meeting the measure. Strongest content areas based on performance were: Tests, with merged averages of tests 1 & 2, 95% and merged averages of 11 written assignments 89%. Weakest performance area: Term Paper: 80%.

UPSA 2700: Planning and Decision Making in Public Organizations

For Spring 2017, course was offered with using an online delivery platform. Students with an average for all course assignments over 70% was 75%, meeting the measure. Strongest performance area of performance was the eight lesson assignments with a 93% average. Scenario exercises (8) averaged 88%.

Analysis:

One-hundred percent (100%) of enrolled students in UPSA 2550 were able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy percent (70%) or higher on semester assignments using a weighted average used to determine the final grade.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of enrolled students in UPSA 2700 were able to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter of the project by scoring seventy percent (70%) using a weighted average used to determine the final grade.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Based on these findings, Measure 1.1 research and writing project requirements are appropriate to evaluate student knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of the course. It is recommended that faculty continue to use the current SLO measure (with modification) and consider a more stringent evaluation rubric to increase the understanding of research and writing for particular subject matter to better differentiate student performances. UPSA 4700 is inappropriate for this measure this objective as it is a capstone type course, not a course for students in lower levels of classification.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

Students will demonstrate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills through a series of scenario-driven exercise in which they are required to analyze and develop a response to municipal management situations. In this response, they must create a plan that contains relevant, justifiable, feasible, and actionable recommendations based on the information presented. 70% of the students will score 8 or higher on the *Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric*

Critical Thinking – Problem-Solving Rubric

Dimension Assessed	Accomplished 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1
(Inquire)	Clearly, accurately, and appropriately identifies key	Identifies most or all key issue/s and/or problem/s.	Identifies some key issue/s and/or problem/s. May have	Most or all of key issues/ and/or problem/s are not

Identify and define key issue/s and/or problem/s	issue/s and/or problem/s.	Some minor inaccuracies or omissions may be present, but do not interfere with meaning.	some inaccuracies, omissions or errors present that interfere with meaning	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.
(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.

Findings: Target Met

UPSA 2700: Planning and Decision Making in Public Organizations

Sixty-seven percent (48 of 72) of problem scenarios meet the prescribed score of 8 on the problem solving rubric. This total was slightly below the desired 70% threshold.

UPSA 4700: Event and Venue Security

Based upon final grades, the only data available, 100% of students completing the capstone project scored above the score 8 specified in the objective.

Analysis:

One-hundred percent (100%) of enrolled students in UPSA 2700 and UPSA 4700 were able to demonstrate the ability to perform critical analysis of municipal management situations, develop appropriate responses and strategies, appropriate to meet course objectives and lesson standards. Current exercises are appropriate devices to provide students with the opportunity to display understanding of foundational concepts and theories of public safety and emergency management responding to fictional scenarios.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Based on these findings, Measure 1.2 research and writing project requirements are appropriate to perform critical thought skills in analysis and response preparation to municipal management situations. It is recommended that the program coordinator in conjunction with others teaching UPSA course modify as appropriate the current SLO measure better aligning wording of the objective to better apply elements of the structure of the two courses used in this measurement.

SLO 2. Senior students will know the role and functions of the various agencies, laws, standards, risks, threats, tasks and assighments in a comprehensive capstone exercise developed in conjunction with a community partner.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

UPSA 4480: Senior Seminar
UPSA 4700: Event and Venue Security

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 through the University of Louisiana Academic Summit, NSU Research Day, using a standardized *research paper rubric* (attached) or a formal presentation to UPSA faculty. The papers and/or projects will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of emergency management, laws, practices and procedures. At least 80% of students sampled will score 75% or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target Met

UPSA 4480: Senior Seminar

Senior Seminar projects were completed and in all cases demonstrated a satisfactory measure of principles of emergency management, applicable law, recognized practices and procedures. All students (100%) met the 75% threshold of this standard. Senior seminar projects employ a progressive problem solving analysis strategy, performed in conjunction with a community partner.

UPSA 4700: Event and Venue Security

Final grades (only data available) demonstrate satisfactory demonstration of student understanding of recognized practices of municipal event security management. At least 80% of students exceeded the 75% threshold standard for this measure.

Analysis:

Within the structure of the degree, UPSA 4700 serves to a preparatory function for UPSA 4480, Senior Seminar, the capstone course for this program.

UPSA 4700 uses preparatory lessons as foundational knowledge for a final project. Scores are consistently high for these exercises. No meaningful distinctions can be made.

UPSA 4480 is a progressive project ending in a finished project incorporating elements of core curriculum courses. No unique form of evaluation exists, due to the diversity of projects selected by the students. The availability of external forums for presentation of work differs by semester.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

Continuation of this measure is recommended, possibly with slight modification. However, verbiage describing external presentations is needed. Forums outside the department (Academic Summit, Research Day, etc.) operate independently and are not aligned with expectations or goals of this assessment.   Faculty evaluation of Senior Seminar projects will be adherent to existing standards.   Senior Seminar projects allow students to explore within the course a problem solving approach in an area of interest to the student in conjunction with a community partner. This approach has shown to be a powerful tool for student learning, community outreach and university service to the community as it resolves real and existing problems.

Measure: 2.2. (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of the term students will be administered a survey asking: "In my public safety administration courses I was provided a collegiate 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." At least 85% of students will respond that they strongly agree or agree with the statement.

Findings: Target Met

UPSA 4480: Senior Seminar

Senior Seminar students were provided the standard course evaluation for the university. The course evaluation comments were consistently positive, suggesting a positive student experience. All (100%) students responded with either "agree" or "strongly agree" to the survey question "In my public safety administration courses I was provided a collegiate 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."

UPSA 4700: Event and Venue Security

UPSA 4700 students responded with either "agree" or "strongly agree" to the survey question "In my Event and Venue Security course I was provided a collegiate level of understanding of homeland security policy, threat and vulnerability assessments and trends associated with Event and Venue Security.

Analysis:

Senior Seminar and Event and Venue Security are senior level courses. The courses dovetail with both courses built around multiple task comprehensive problem solving exercises in which critical thought and conceptual and theoretical applications are required. Event and Venue Security prepares students for Senior Seminar, the capstone course for the degree program.

A student testimonial as a post-graduation event gave praise to the program in a significant public forum.

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

This year, standard student evaluation of course procedures consistent with university policy were followed. During the next academic year, an exercise will be included in Senior Seminar course seeking information consistent with this measure of the SLO. The survey will capture comments not only on this course, but other core degree courses and courses with vary by students based on their concentration.

Senior Seminar has a community partner component, which is beneficial to students, and spreads the footprint of the university. Coupled with Event and Venue Security, the two courses complement each other providing a six academic hour experience fulfilling desired capstone exercise elements. When available, dissemination of findings in external forums enhance the experience, however instability and inconsistency in university and system commitment to providing external forums deny building these experiences into syllabi. The presentation to faculty format provides a sufficient alternative, and will be incorporated into course expectations.

SLO 3. Senior 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.

UPSA 3700: Disaster Response Operations and Management
UPSA 4400: Legal Issues in Emergency Management
UPSA 4480: Senior Seminar
UPSA 4700: Event and Venue Security

Measure 3.1. (Indirect – Knowledge / Attitude)

During the final semester of the senior year, the department will sample students with a *performance survey*. One question on this survey will state: "The Unified Public Safety Administration 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 UPSA program students, asking them the degree to which they agree with the statement, "NSU 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.

Findings: Target Not Met

UPSA 3700: Disaster Response Operations and Management

This year, standard student evaluation of course procedures consistent with university policy were followed for this course. Data student evaluations were not available. No evaluation of student employers were conducted.

UPSA 4400: Legal Issues in Emergency Management

This course was not offered this academic year.

UPSA 4480: Senior Seminar

This year, standard student evaluation of course procedures consistent with university policy were followed for this course. No student employer evaluations were conducted. Elements of this SLO (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) are not elements of this evaluation instrument. Nonetheless, students had a favorable impression of the course and were appreciative of the final project.

UPSA 4700: Event and Venue Security

This year, standard student evaluation of course procedures consistent with university policy were followed for this course. No student employer evaluations were conducted. Elements of this SLO (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) are not elements of this evaluation instrument**.** Nonetheless, students had a favorable impression of the course and its content.

Analysis:

Standard student evaluation instruments are not adequate for this measure of the SLO. Supplemental instruments are needed to incorporate specific UPSA elements for assessment consistent with SLO. General student evaluations are not appropriate for this manner, and contain elements designed to measure instructor proficiency and likability. In addition, privacy concerns are at issue, specifically the exposure of student critiques of the faculty to be viewed by other faculty not supervising the employee.

Faculty also have a privacy concern about surveying employer's regarding student performance. No authority is granted (nor required), but students could feel surveys and content with employers as inappropriate. The actions could be seen as intrusive and unwarranted. Further, the former student may not be in a position consistent with their area of study, or the questionnaire relevant to job held or to the employer. No element of courses evaluate ethical considerations in the construction of contingency plans/responses in comprehensive class projects for any of the four courses.

Needing further revision, this objective is unfulfilled and designated as "unmet".

Action - Decision or Recommendation:

For Senior Seminar projects, a survey of community partners will be incorporated into the curriculum. The survey will focus on the project's role in addressing needs of the community partner. In the Event and Venue final project, an exercise/element of course will be an "all hazards" evaluation of the project.

For all classes evaluated in this SLO an ethics component will be included, should none exist.

Resolution after consultation with additional resources will help make a determination of the appropriateness of outreach to student employers. The appropriateness, ethicalness and legality of these issues remains unresolved.

Comprehensive Summary of key decisions and findings:

The UPSA degree program continues to be an efficient, unique and profitable offering for the university, extending support to students in multiple disciplines of the university beyond the degree program itself, specifically: criminal justice, resource management, general studies and ROTC. The program shows continued growth and addresses the need of non-traditional students working in emergency management in this state and beyond.

Since inception, the capstone course has included a project where students working with community partners create a product to address a public safety need. These projects have become in a variety of public and private sector organizations as policy, practice and operational protocols forming public safety policy.

A new course and use of an existing course has been adapted for use in support of a new degree program, and assessment of these courses will begin.

Alignment of the benefits of these viable products with educational objectives of the curriculum can be improved. In some instances, superior student performances indicate the need for more rigor in coursework and expectations. In other instances better measurement and metric are indicated.

Over the next year refinement of instruments, measuring objective will be done to better identify successes and weaknesses in the coursework and curriculum. Assessment of additional courses used in this and other curriculums will be evaluated for inclusion of this or possible new Student Learning Objectives.