

Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): Physics Department

2014-15 Academic Year

A. College, Department/Program, Date

College _____ CSTH _____
Department/Program _____ Physics _____
Date _____ 12 June 2015 _____

B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Name and title _____ Jerry LaSala, Professor and Chair _____
Or Paul Nakroshis, Associate Professor

C. Degree Program

Name of Degree Program _____ BA in Physics _____

D. Assessment of Student Learning in Your Program

Step 1: Identify Student Learning Outcomes (What are students able to do by the end of your program?)

- a. List 3-5 of the most important student learning outcomes for your program.
- b. Then, identify which student learning outcomes were assessed this past academic year. (One or more of the outcomes and corresponding assessment plans could come from your department's CORE Course Blueprint(s).

Step 2: How and When were the Learning Outcomes assessed?

- a. *Briefly describe the assessment tools, measures, or forms of evidence that were utilized to demonstrate students' accomplishment of the learning outcomes selected.*

- b. *Briefly describe when and how you implemented the assessment activity.*

Step 3: Process of Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning

- a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results, and how you expect to improve student learning.*

E. Other Course Assessment Activities:

The physics department at the University of Southern Maine uses multiple methods to assess learning.

First, within the lecture/discussion sections, we use conceptual questions both to promote peer to peer interaction, and to assess understanding at a qualitative level. Second, we are about to bring physics majors into the classroom as Learning Assistants (LA) to help facilitate discussions, and to get further feedback on student understanding.

In addition to conceptual questions in the lecture/discussion, we are now beginning to perform pre and post-testing of students' in the introductory physics sequence, and will keep records of student scores. In the first semester, we will likely use the Mechanics Baseline Exam, and are researching other possibilities as well as looking into an Electricity and Magnetism exam suitable for pre and post testing.

Of course, we also employ the standard use of written problem sets, and in class exams.

F. Are there “community engagement” activities integrated in your departmental curriculum?

a. Please indicate which of the components, listed below, are included in your program’s curriculum, and then indicate if the activities are required or optional for students in your major.

<u>Community Engagement Activity</u>	<u>Included</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	___	R	O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	___	R	O
Internship, or a Field Experience	___	R	O
Independent Study (community-related project)	___	R	O
Capstone Course (community-related project)	___	R	O
Service-Learning (a component of a course)	___	R	O
Study Abroad, or an International Program	___	R	O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	___	R	O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	___	R	O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	___	R	O
Other Activities (not mentioned above):			

Additional Comments:

With our full-time faculty reduced by 57% this year with no concomitant reduction in student enrollments, the remaining faculty members have been severely constrained in any efforts to expand or codify our assessment methodology. We hope to be able to do more in the future.