College of Management and Health Service (CMHS) Programs

Program Improvement Report - Summer 2019

This summary report describes the evidence that assessment results are being used for program improvements in the CMHS academic programs, as reported by the departments' Assessment of Student Learning Plans (ASLP) forms for the 2018-19 academic year.

School of Business

The USM School of Business used two direct measures to assess our program and student learning. We discuss these measures below. The disciplinary competence goal is assessed in the Capstone Exam. Other learning goals are assessed using data collected in content-relevant courses.

1. *Student Data Collection*—Specific embedded course assignments are collected and scored using standardized rubrics. Allows for the longitudinal measurement of our goals/objectives and the evaluation/effectiveness of curricular and pedagogical changes.
2. *Capstone Exam*--An 80-item test covering all discipline areas, which is administered to all students nearing graduation each calendar year. The Exam allows for discipline-specific evaluation.

The Standing Assurance of Learning (AoL) Committee gathered data in the fall, analyzed it in the spring, and presented findings and recommendations at the May retreat.

The AoL Committee recommended dropping the leadership learning goal. Approved by faculty vote, 17 May 2019. Because the School's new mission does not reference leadership, that learning goal was dropped.

The AoL Committee recommended switching from Capstone exam to ETS Field Test in Business. Approved by faculty vote, 17 May 2019. Since the Field Test requires additional resources, this discussion will move into the Dean's office. Summary of findings are below:

The findings showed that students were not meeting targets for disciplinary competence in multiple areas, the AoL committee expressed concerns about the current process for assessing these goals in the Capstone Exam. Approximately half of the students in upper-level business courses have transferred in at the junior level, and most have not taken the relevant subject matter at the School, including required courses in Accounting, Marketing, Legal Environment of Business (which includes Ethics), and two foundation courses in algebra and statistics. This means that half of the questions on the Capstone Exam cover material that about half of the students sitting for the exam did not take at the School. In other words, the Capstone Exam is not assessing what USM School of Business graduates have learned in USM School of Business courses.

Furthermore, while the regular learning objectives were introduced, reinforced and then assessed in the relevant subject matters, the disciplinary areas get uneven treatment. For example, non-Accounting majors who start at USM take the two required accounting courses near the beginning of their careers but are assessed on that learning only at the end. Non-accounting majors who transferred in—about half of the students taking the exam—did not take those courses at USM at all. Other disciplines are represented in the Capstone Exam scores in numbers relative to how recently students either first encountered the subject matter or had it reinforced in a subsequent course. Although the only required Marketing course is taken early on at the 200-level, the large number of Marketing majors who take several marketing courses probably explains the high scores in those areas. The same is true of Ethics (reinforced) and Management (taken more recently), but not of other areas either distant in time or not reinforced or both: MIS, Accounting, Finance, International, and Operations Management.

In all, the Committee made five key recommendations:

1. Drop the Leadership learning goal and outcome altogether since it is no longer reflected in the mission.
2. Change how the School administers the Capstone Exam or consider replacing it altogether with the ETS Field Test in Business.
3. Continue with the current AoL plan until the implementation of the new undergraduate curriculum in 2020.
4. In AY 2019-2020, write and approve new learning objectives and metrics for assessing competence in entrepreneurial thinking and fluency with business technologies as described in the new mission.
5. Review the AoL system after the implementation of the new curriculum.

In addition, the committee suggests the following adjustments:

1. Make a slight change in pedagogy or curriculum for the Oral Communication learning goal, namely, to make eye contact with the audience, speak at a steady rate, try to show enthusiasm, and so forth.
2. Work with the Department of English or the Learning Commons at both the Portland and Gorham USM Libraries on a "refresher" course on grammar, language and spelling to improve the weak area of the Written Communication learning goals. In addition, SB faculty should remember to give students feedback on grammar, language and spelling when evaluating their written work.
3. Faculty assessing Ethics should emphasize the nature of the three ethical frameworks and the implementation of courses of action.
4. Make a slight change in pedagogy for the Quantitative Analysis learning goal, by putting greater emphasis on sensitivity analysis. Make changes in pedagogy by emphasizing basic analytical and reporting skills.

Summary: The School of Business will make program-level curriculum adjustments; based upon their assessment results. Slight changes at the course-level are being planned for improving the oral communication, quantitative analysis, and written communication learning goals.

School of Education and Human Development (SEHD)

Adult & Higher Education

In the <u>Adult & Higher Education (AHE)</u> master's degree program, all of our student learning outcomes are assessed throughout fall, spring, and summer sessions (as part of the experience in the graduate courses), and at the end of the program (i.e., portfolio and comprehensive essay).

Much of the student feedback is attained through the advising process. Advisor-advisee conversations take place via email, telephone, *Zoom* video-conferencing, and when geographically accessible face-to-face. The end-of-program portfolio and comprehensive essay also provides feedback to the program about what is working well and what isn't, and what students are learning and areas where they struggle.

Based on recent feedback about the overall program, we have created two new courses, one a skill-based course on using technology in adult and higher education and the other a course on foundations of academic advising. Feedback received from students has also inspired changes to longstanding courses in the program including Program Management (HRD 633) and Facilitating Adult Learning (HRD 630).

In fact, over the history of this program many changes have been made based on student feedback. These have included the creation of new courses, for example "Spirituality in Adult and Higher Education" and "The Older Learner." Also, results from program assessments has influenced specific strategies undertaken within selected courses such as the critical use of peer feedback on modules facilitated by capstone students.

<u>Summary</u>: The AHE program faculty makes continuous program-level changes based upon the assessment results from the end of year portfolios, comprehensive essays, and student feedback. Recent program improvements included adding two new courses, and changes in two long-standing courses, based upon the assessment results.

Counseling Education

The Counseling Education program uses national certification test scores, internship and practicum requirements, and portfolio assessments for assessing the student learning outcomes. Per their accreditation standards, the program faculty members annually review the assessments in the fall semester and make changes where needed in the program and in the required counseling courses. We recently added new course materials to our HCE 500 course (orientation on counseling profession), the HCE 607 (school counseling services) course, the

HCE 644-645 courses (crisis intervention), and in the HCE 621 (consultation course).   We reviewed and amended course delivery approaches in our HCE 605 (career) course. Lastly, we integrated the rubric (Hanna Rubric by Internship Supervisors) into the overall assessment process, shared with students and internship instructors.

Summary: The Counseling program recently made some course-level changes (such as adding course materials and amending course delivery) in several courses, based upon their assessment results. They also made a program-level change by integrating the Hanna Rubric in their assessment process (which is used my internship supervisors). The program will be reviewing their most recent assessment data in the fall semester.

Educational Leadership

In the Educational Leadership program, students are assessed on the ISLLC and PSEL Standards and must demonstrate evidence of proficiency on each of the standards. One of the assessment methods includes a year-long/3-semester internship course, which serves as the culmination of students' experience via an exit presentation and the student's documentation of meeting each of the Standards. The other method is the capstone course-action research project, which serves as a pivotal assessment of the learning outcomes.

Educational Leadership faculty members annually review the assessment results during a summer retreat and present program results to the Educational Leadership Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee is made up of superintendents, curricula leaders, principals, Department of Education officials, and directors of professional associations in Maine.

During the 2017-18 academic year, we revised our year-long internship to include the PSEL Standards as well as the ISLLC Standards in order to ensure that our students could be successfully licensed in states other than Maine. As a result of the continued review of our assessment results and student experiences, we are adding the self-assessment and goal setting tools three times during the year-long internship, directly aligned to our program outcomes/standards. We also created a new rubric tool for the culminating assessment which includes an hour presentation by each candidate to both their field and university mentors.

The Professional Educator concentration began administering self-assessment & goal setting tools aligned to the InTASC Standards during the 2018-19 academic year. Those tools have been created and piloted.

In the new Teacher Leadership concentration, we have been revising our Course Blueprints, syllabi, and assessment/learning plans for each of the courses for the degree in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (which will launch in the fall 2019). For that degree, we are in the process of creating a

program curriculum map, documenting the program level outcomes and how each of the 10 courses align to the program outcomes. We also are in the process of creating curriculum maps for each of the 10 courses, showing the course level outcomes, their connections to the program outcomes, and then the module-level outcomes and their alignment of the course level outcomes.

Summary: The Educational Leadership program is making program-level curriculum changes to each of their concentration areas based upon their annual assessment results. This year, they are adding self-assessment and goal setting tools in the internship course, and using a new rubric for the student presentations. The program will be reviewing relevant courses and creating an assessment process for their new degree concentration.

Educational & School Psychology

In the Educational Psychology (MS) program, standard assignments and tests embedded within required courses are used to assess learning outcomes during the program. After the completion of the program, passing scores on the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) Examination serve as another measure of attaining the learning outcomes. The Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) provides us with annual data on our students' performance.

Key assessments embedded within courses are reviewed by the respective faculty member, and students' performance on key assessments is reflected in their final course grades. During regularly scheduled department meetings, core program faculty met to develop action plans to support students who do not meet the criterion of a B or better in one or more required courses. Also, the faculty reviewed data from student course evaluations to identify courses which may need to be revised to support student learning, and reviewed the data on BCBA examination pass rates.

Based on student performance data and course evaluation feedback, the program identified the need to re-evaluate its approach to courses delivered in an asynchronous online format (SPY 671 and SPY 674). Two program faculty applied for and obtained CTEL grants to support this course revision work, and they are currently collaborating to develop standardized course shells that meet Quality Matters standards. Emphasis will be placed on developing diverse multimedia content and providing multiple engaging options for students to demonstrate learning.

Although graduates performed well above national averages on the BCBA certification exam, initial pass rates were not 100%. In the coming year, program faculty will explore the possibility of embedding the CBA Learning Modules Series within the curriculum. These modules offer interactive learning exercises to prepare students' for success on the BCBA examination.

In the SPY 607 course, students completed an applied learning project that required them to integrate core behavior analytic assessment and intervention knowledge and skills. The project is now being graded using a comprehensive and published scoring rubric.

In the School Psychology (PsyD) program, all outcomes are assessed each year for students in corresponding phases of the program. The assessment measures are: annual matriculated student report, field-placement evaluations, comprehensive exam, dissertation, portfolios, and the Praxis exam.

The core program faculty meet regularly at the end of the academic year to review each student's Annual Matriculated Student Report and grades. Areas of strength and weakness were discussed, and written feedback was generated. Advisors met with their students to review feedback and develop action plans for students who were not making sufficient progress.

Comprehensive exams were scored by core program faculty within 7 days of completion. Faculty score the exam questions relevant to their areas of expertise, and the department chair sums the total scores to determine whether each student passes or needs to re-take the exam.

Successful defense of the dissertation was determined by the vote of a 3-person dissertation committee, which is composed of two core program faculty and another faculty member or practicing psychologist. Votes occur immediately after the oral defense, and results were communicated to students the same day.

Field-placement evaluations and portfolios were reviewed by the program's Field Placement Coordinator at the end of each academic semester. Assessment results determine whether each student passes the associated field-placement course.

At the level of the individual student, assessment data were used to establish individualized action plans. Recent data will be used to assist students in developing strategies to improve skills related to organization and professional writing.

At the level of the program, assessment data were used to identify and address gaps in the curriculum. Recent data informed the revisions to include an additional course on systems-level preventative and responsive services, to refine expectations for field-placement portfolios, and to improve practicum seminars. The new course—SPY 610—is being offered this summer.

Effective fall 2019, practicum students will be required to complete (a) two additional case studies to demonstrate intervention competencies and (b) one advocacy project to promote awareness of the profession. Also, effective fall 2019, practicum seminars will include didactic instruction and learning activities related to early childhood assessment practices, clinical interviewing skills, IEP meeting facilitation, and a few other topics on which students need additional training. Additionally, program faculty are in the process of writing a proposal to develop a series of professional development workshops for field-placement supervisors, in order to support their need for continuing education credits and improve the quality of the supervision experience for students.

Portfolios were developed and reviewed for each field-placement course: Practicum I, Practicum II, and Internship. Comprehensive projects with associated grading rubrics were included in all assessment and intervention courses.

Summary: Both the Educational and School Psychology programs made program-level changes in the curriculum, based upon assessment data (certification scores, field placement evaluations and portfolios). In addition, some of the course-level assignments are being improved based upon student performance and course evaluation feedback.

Literature, Language, and Culture

In the <u>TESOL</u> (master's degree) program, all five TESOL International Standards for Teaching Professionals are assessed annually in the final seminar course, EDU 635. This is required for continued state program approval of this professional program where graduates who are certified teachers may earn an add-on K-12 ESL endorsement. The direct measure required for earning this degree includes either a passing score on the Praxis Subject Assessment for English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), a national exam required for certification (scored by ETS), or a passing score on the program's comprehensive examination (scored by program faculty, using a criterion rubric). The program faculty have discussed these assessment results at our regular program meetings.

All master's candidates passed the national Praxis exam, indicating that the program curriculum aligns well with the national standards. One or two students annually select the program's (in-house) comprehensive exam in lieu of the national exam, and those students have passed. The 100% pass rate indicates that the TESOL Professional Teaching Standards are being achieved by our master's students in TESOL.

One change we implemented with this year's comprehensive examination was a 3-point rubric in lieu of a 4-point rubric to simplify and more accurately evaluate the content learning of students who choose the in-house exam.

All of our courses in SEHD have blueprints, which must list course outcomes. Faculty have the freedom to decide how they will teach and assess each of the outcomes on a blueprint. This year, we are currently working with Academic Partnerships to convert this program to an accelerated online program (AOP). We are having conversations now about aligning assessments across course sections.

Summary: In the TESOL degree program, changes were made at the program-level (revised the comprehensive exam rubric) based upon on assessment data (exam results). In addition, plans are underway to convert the program to an online format; and faculty members will make the adjustments in their courses, as needed, in the upcoming year.

Teacher Education

In the Undergraduate Teaching program, each of the assessment measures are continuously documented in the TK20 software. All program assessments are aligned with the Educational Standards and Internship course assessment rubric. The assessments are the following:

Direct Measures in Internship: (1) Mid-semester (fall) standards review check with site-based supervisor, (2) End of placement 1 in December- standards review—outcome must demonstrate intern meet at least "Basic" on program-wide standards rubric (3) End of placement 2 in May- standards review— outcome must demonstrate intern meet at least "proficient" on program-wide standards rubric, and (4) Lead-teaching Lesson Series in April--outcome must demonstrate intern meet at least "proficient" on program-wide Unit rubric.   All of the above are regularly reviewed and documented in Tk20 (standards review by supervisor and cohort coordinator; unit by Assessment and Planning instructor).

Direct Measures for Certification Recommendation (at program completion): students must have completed prerequisite coursework, taken Praxis II and had scores reported to USM, passed the internship, and grades finalized.   All of the above are regularly reviewed and verified by the Office of Educ Prep's certification officer.

The program faculty reviewed: the CAEP Accreditation update (filed by Office of Ed Prep), the Internship course student evaluation survey results, and the Department Student Survey F17 Report (results of our majors, showed 84% very satisfied/satisfied with quality of teaching and advising in the program).   Based upon the assessment results, the following learning improvements are being planned: a) Supervisor training will be implemented for internship supervisors, b)Undergraduates are going to be rolled into site based districts for internship with graduate students for supports and career advising, c) Curriculum changes to add EDU 222 and remove EDU 310 to meet state certification changes, and d) Reviewing the returning to 6 credits internship and 6 credits planning and assessment to align with grad program, as see gap in student understanding of planning and assessment in fall of internship year (course sequence prior to 2017-2018).

In the (master's level) ETEP Teaching program, the student learning outcomes are assessed each year, and have been aligned with the national standards adopted by the state Dept of Education for initial teacher licensure (INTASC). See internship handbook for the list of all student learning outcomes. All the standards are connected to student teaching/internship in the community, and program assessments are documented in the TK20 software.

The program faculty reviewed: the CAEP Accreditation update (filed by Office of Ed Prep), the Internship course student evaluation survey results, and the Department Student Survey F17 and F18 Reports (most of our majors showed very satisfied/satisfied with quality of teaching and advising in the program).   Based upon the assessment results, the following learning improvements are being planned: a) Supervisor training will be implemented for internship supervisors, and b) Curriculum changes to add EDU 522 and remove EDU 521 or EDU 562 to meet state certification changes.

Summary: In the Teacher Education programs, the program-level changes being made for this upcoming year will include curriculum updates to meet state certification changes and training for internship supervisors, based upon the assessment data (information from test scores, internships, and surveys).

Special Education

In the <u>Special Education</u> (masters) program, the student learning outcomes are assessed each year, and aligned with the national standards adopted by the state Dept of Education for initial teacher licensure (INTASC). All the standards are connected to student teaching/internship in the community, and program assessments are documented in the TK20 software. See Special Education Program Evidence Guide for the fall standards review.

The program faculty committee annually review the TK20 artifacts, and make minor adjustments. All program changes are completed in response to student feedback, student performance, and school partner feedback and changes in the field. This year, we are currently working with Academic Partnerships to convert this program to an accelerated online program (AOP). Conversations are currently going on about aligning assessments across course sections.

Summary: In the Special Education program, curriculum adjustments are regularly made, based upon the assessment data (student and internship feedback), and program-level changes (i.e. moving courses to an online format) are currently being discussed.

School of Public Service (Muskie)

Geography/Anthropology

In the Geography & Anthropology (GYA) program, we assess all our program-level student learning outcomes each year at the course-level.   Research reports and poster sessions are submitted by students as part of the graduation requirements and assessed against stated requirements. We also use student feedback from alumni surveys and feedback obtained from our industry surveys to make

adjustments in the program. Faculty maintain active memberships in local, regional, and national professional associations to ensure learning outcomes tally with the current national standards. Student learning is assessed through presentations at local, regional and national conferences and at Thinking Matters (USM's in-house student research conference).

The program faculty have ongoing discussions at the monthly departmental meetings to review submitted student research products and presentation projects. Assessment results are reviewed on a regular basis, and survey data has been reviewed by faculty. All the input received has been used to modify our curriculum.   Recently, a required internship or fieldwork was dropped from our curriculum when we lost so much teaching power and could no longer sustain them.

Currently, our new curriculum design is an ongoing process and is based mostly on the feedback. Further discussions in the fall 2019 will assist us in how to move forward.

Summary: In the GYA program, program-level changes are ongoing and currently happening, based upon assessment data from student research projects and survey feedback. These assessments have been reviewed, and are assisting the faculty in making modifications in the new curriculum design beginning in the upcoming academic year.

Tourism & Hospitality

During the 2018-19 academic year, the Tourism & Hospitality (TAH) undergraduate program faculty met to decide how they will measure their three major program outcomes.   The department reviewed a selection of student tests, written and oral work in the 200, 300, and 400 level classes, as well as interviews and survey information of a selection of students graduating in the concentration areas.

In the spring 2019, the faculty agreed to use a pre-test assessment in the required fall semester TAH 150 course for all first-year majors and a post-test assessment during the required spring semester TAH 409 Capstone course for the senior year majors. A rubric for the TAH 409 course was developed and will be used to assess major learning goals based on student work.   The pre and post assessments will begin in the upcoming academic year (2019-20 year).

During the past year, learning outcomes were established for the two concentration areas: the TAH Hospitality Management concentration (will begin measuring outcomes in fall 2021), and the TAH Sustainable Tourism Innovation & Development concentration (will begin measuring outcomes in fall 2023).

Summary: In the TAH program, they developed assessment methods in the past year and a rubric for the entry course and capstone course based upon the assessment results (course assignments, interviews, and surveys). In the next academic year, they will be using their new pre-post assessment and rubric to assess student work.   In addition, learning outcomes were identified for the two new degree concentrations.

Policy, Planning & Management

In the Policy, Planning & Management (PPM) program, we confirmed our seven student learning outcomes for the program and created a curriculum map. In addition, we examined patterns of student learning across courses and other student activities at our regular faculty meetings. Embedded course assignments were selected for core courses and will be used for assessing student outcome achievement.

At the Curriculum Review committee meeting, we reviewed the course syllabi and assessment results. Based on the results, we recommended instructors to modify course contents and/or assessment methods. At the bi-annual advisory board meeting, we shared our program assessment results with the advisory board members, and we reflected their feedback in our curriculum.

In the spring 2019, we conducted a student survey and asked about their career goals, class format and course time preferences, evaluations of class learning experience and satisfaction levels, and desired skill-sets from the program. After reviewing the survey results at the faculty meeting, we recommended instructors to modify course contents and/or assessment methods to reflect the survey results.

We modified the list of required and elective courses to reflect student demands and the feedback from the practitioners in the field. With the increased numbers of students during last several years, we increased the frequency of core offerings. We also offered selected core courses in various class-formats (online and offline) to meet demands from various students groups, and decided to increase the number of summer courses.   Lastly, specific rubrics are outlined in the course syllabi for PPM 612 and PPM 615, and rubrics are being created for many of the elective courses.

Summary: In the PPM program, curriculum and program-level changes were made (increased offerings in core courses) based upon both direct and indirect assessment data. Course-level changes included the selection of course-embedded assignments, adding rubrics, and modifying content for selected PPM courses.

Public Health

Based upon the requirement of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the MPH program (Master's in Public Health) faculty assess each of the competencies/learning outcomes every year. Our

curriculum map shows the assignments that are linked to each of the course learning objectives and how it will be evaluated.   In the field experience and a final capstone project, students must show that they can demonstrate achievement across multiple competency domains.

In addition to individual assignments, our program uses the student self-assessments (ratings from the standard course evaluation plus departmental questions) and an annual faculty assessment (i.e. faculty ratings for each student's progress towards the degree) to make improvements in the program.

After reviewing the assessment results, each faculty member agreed to use the student self-assessment ratings to adjust their course structure, processes, and assignments (as necessary) to improve instruction and application for the objectives (more specifically to the objectives that students did not strongly agree that they achieved the outcome).   Also, the faculty assessment ratings will be used as opportunities to address concerns with individual students (for example, students who did not meet the communications competencies may be referred to the Learning Commons for writing support).

Summary: In the MPH program, course-level changes were made (i.e. structure, processes, and assignments) by the individual faculty based upon the student self-assessment/course evaluation data. Also, based upon faculty assessment results, students will be provided with additional opportunities for academic learning support.

School of Social Work

The School of Social Work, including the BSW and the MSW programs, assesses nine competencies per the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and all of the standards are infused into the course objectives through the entire curriculum, including the fieldwork.   The program uses our in-house Competency Attainment Evaluation (CAE) and a Fieldwork Evaluation to assess student learning outcomes in both the BSW and MSW programs.

The Competency Attainment Evaluation (CAE) tool is now in its third year of use. The CAE is a 60 question multiple choice exit "test" that students are required to take before graduating. There are nine domains of questions (for each of the 9 CSWE competencies) to assess student attainment of competencies through coursework. Data collection occurs at the end of the spring semester once all courses are completed. Students are asked to take the CAE without preparation. The CAE is delivered through a BlackBoard test site. For the BSW students, the benchmark of competency attainment is set at 70% for each domain, and for the MSW students, the benchmark is set for 80% for each domain.

The Fieldwork Evaluation is critical in the assessment of competency attainment. The field evaluation tool is designed for field instructors to rate student performance on a likert scale for behaviors that represent each of the 9 competencies. Scores are used to assess overall student performance to ensure they are meeting standards of practice. The final fieldwork evaluation data is tabulated at the end of each academic year and utilized in our ongoing program assessment.

BSW students engage in a one year-long senior field placement under close supervision of a field instructors in the placement agency (480 hours of fieldwork split over two semesters). MSW students engage in a two year-long senior field placement under close supervision of a field instructors in the placement agency (480 hours of foundation year fieldwork; and 600 hours for concentration year).

The data tabulations are shared with faculty and discussed each fall in a faculty meeting. The faculty are asked to bring this data back to their Course Content committees for review, reflection and action on areas needing improvement. The Committees for each curriculum domain review the findings for their particular areas and make modifications to the curriculum accordingly to improve the course material and the teaching strategies toward the goal of improving student learning outcomes.

The faculty modify course delivery techniques, content, or assignments based upon the assessment results. Faculty members create their own assessment methods and rubrics tailored to their courses that assess both mastery of course content and competency attainment.

Summary: The BSW and MSW programs make program-level changes each year by modifying the curriculum after the faculty committees review the assessment results (competency and fieldwork evaluations). Individual faculty will continue to make course-level changes (the delivery, content, and assignments) as necessary to improve student learning outcomes.