

Lewiston-Auburn College (LAC) Programs

Program Improvement Report – Summer 2019

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

Leadership & Organizational Studies

In the Leadership & Organizational Studies (LOS) program, we updated our program-level outcomes over the past two years, and in the past academic year, two of the learning outcomes were assessed (i.e. students' knowledge of major theories of leadership, and student's ability to build skills in motivating individuals, groups and organizations). The assessment methods included using a case study where students would identify and apply various leadership theories in LOS 500, and using a structured reflection paper which measured the students' application of theory and concepts to their understanding of work group experiences in LOS 501. Plans are being made to add rubrics next year.

The departmental faculty reviewed the assessment results in February and in May 2019. Specific improvements ranged from removing duplicative assessment or learning activities across the curriculum and rewording the reflection prompts in order to maximize student learning outcomes. Also, we added a "service-learning component" requirement to the bachelor's program. In addition, the faculty had conversations about changes in the catalog.

Summary: The LOS program made program-level changes (updated learning outcomes and learning activities in the curriculum) and course-level changes (assignment revisions and rubrics) based upon their assessment results.

Natural & Applied Sciences

In the Natural & Applied Sciences (NAS) program, student outcomes were evaluated at the end of the fall 2018 semester by applying Bloom's Taxonomy to evaluate the level of mastery by students in SCI 105 and SCI 170 (Biological Principles 1 and Anatomy & Physiology I).

The program faculty reviewed student achievement in the two entry level course series. The learning outcomes (to apply, evaluate, and synthesize new information) were then reassessed in the SCI 305 (Molecular Physiology) and SCI 315 (Environmental Health).

The following program improvements will be made: a) General Biology course will include additional policy discussion and review, in light of revised EPA publication guidelines, and b) Health sciences courses will be implementing a case study review from the 100-level through the 300-level of courses.

Summary: The NAS program made program-level changes (identified program learning outcomes) and course-level changes (including assignment improvements at every class level) based upon assessment data.

Occupational Therapy

The Master's in Occupational Therapy (MOT) program assesses all the student learning outcomes regularly, and uses a mandated curriculum map, based upon the AOTA accreditation standards. The program faculty members reviewed designated items each month at the faculty meetings.

As part of the program accreditation and the industry trends, the faculty reviewed the assessment results regularly. Using the national certification exam results and fieldwork assignments, program-level changes are made. In addition, responses from the student satisfaction surveys have helped us make improvements in the orientation program and in the advising for first-year and second-year students.

Based upon support from the community, program improvements for the upcoming year will include: developing a continuous part-time track, and plans are being made to work with the Board of Trustees on two doctoral level degrees.

Summary: The MOT department has made some program-level changes (orientation and advising) based upon the assessment results of student satisfaction surveys. Upcoming changes will include adding a part-time program and doctoral degree programs.

Social & Behavioral Sciences

The Social & Behavioral Sciences (SBS) program faculty significantly reviewed, revised, and rewrote the program-level learning outcomes over the past academic year and can now set-up a manageable strategy to select and implement specific assessment methods during this upcoming year. The curriculum re-design work resulted in two significant changes with relevance to assessment.

First, we have introduced a new required course at the entry-level (SBS 210: Intro to Social & Behavioral Sciences) that is designed to introduce many of the SBS learning outcomes with particular focus on the practice of applying a multi-disciplinary focus to a selected topic/question, critical/creating thinking, writing, and information literacy skills.

Second, we are changing the old capstone course to SBS 430 Applied Social and Public Policy. The feedback from the USM Core Curriculum Committee and Asst Provost on the proposed capstone course has been the catalyst for productive faculty work to identify the essential program learning outcomes that will inform the design of course blueprints and rubrics for SBS 210 and SBS 430. The central focus in fall 2019 will be to submit a revised proposal for the updated capstone course to the Core Curriculum Committee.

With the blueprints and a common rubric for the SBS 210 entry course and the new SBS 430 capstone course, it allows the SBS program to begin assessing the student learning outcomes during the upcoming academic year.

Summary: The SBS department made significant changes at the program-level and the course-level. Student learning outcomes have been revised and rewritten, and course-embedded assessment methods and rubrics were developed to use in the upcoming year.
