Department of Environmental Studies: Master Assessment Plan

Department: Environmental Studies

Assessment Coordinator: Myers / Medler

Departmental Mission:
The Environmental Studies Department fosters excellence in applied interdisciplinary environmental problem solving by providing undergraduate and graduate students with learning and leadership challenges at crucial human interfaces with natural/ecological systems. The department pursues its goals through partnerships with, and service to, non-governmental organizations, businesses, governmental agencies, civil society and other institutions at the local, state, regional, national and international levels.

The department is guided by the following values:
• collaboration between faculty and students and across disciplines, professions, sectors of society, and divergent points of view;
• critical, integrative, and innovative systems thinking and action;
• creation of excellent learning communities;
• rigor, significance, and originality in applied and basic scholarly work; and
• a broad humanistic outlook.

Department Student Learning Objectives:
Graduates of the department’s programs understand:
1. how socio-ecological systems change across time and place.
2. how to identify and analyze complex problems, mediate diverse stakeholder perspectives, and generate creative solutions.
3. how to produce, interpret and apply research in a solution-oriented context.
4. how to ethically evaluate social priorities and their risks.

5. Graduates are good communicators.
6. Graduates are experienced in collaborative problem solving.
7. Graduates possess skills needed for entry into environmental professions or advanced study.

Department-wide Student Learning Objectives Assessed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>SLO’s Assessed</th>
<th>Use of the Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final exams, papers, presentations and projects in ENVS 303 and 304</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Summaries of student performance, relative to the SLO, are reported to the Chair/assessment coordinator by faculty teaching ENVS 305. The Chair/coordinator summarizes responses for the department, together with other data, in the annual assessment meeting. The meeting concludes in the creation of a departmental improvement plan.</td>
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<td>Consultation with ESCI faculty teaching ESCI 302, 310, 325 and 392, and analysis of patterns on mid and final exams</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Summaries of strengths and weaknesses in ENVS students’ performance relative to the SLO, are reported to the Chair/assessment coordinator. These data are summarized, shared, and acted upon, as described above.</td>
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<td>Addressed in program-specific plans</td>
<td>2,3,5</td>
<td>Program faculty define program-specific instantiations of these departmental objectives, construct measures of them, gather data, and summarize student performance. Together with other program-specific learning outcomes enumerated below, these data are shared and discussed with program and departmental faculty and result in the creation of a program improvement plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exams and papers in ENVS 305</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Summaries of student performance, relative to the SLO’s, are reported to the Chair/assessment coordinator by faculty teaching ENVS 305. These data are summarized, shared, and acted upon, as described for other departmental SLO’s, above.</td>
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<td>Self-report measure administered to students at conclusion of Capstone courses¹</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>Instructors of capstone courses review student responses and summarize main themes for the Chair/assessment coordinator. These data shared, and acted upon, as described for other departmental SLO’s, above.</td>
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| Internship write up response²; Alumni Survey | 7 | -Internship advisors forward to Chair/assessment coordinator all students’ responses to standard internship report prompt; responses summarized and acted upon as described above.  
-Alumni are asked to self report adequacy of their skill, knowledge & dispositions provided by their degree, as measured by their job performance. These data is summarized, shared and acted upon, as described above. |

1. Self-report questions tap students’ perceptions of: preparation for teamwork; ability of team to understand and work across disciplines in project group; and steps of problem-solving process utilized by group.
2. Standard prompt included in instructions for internship write up: “How well did your coursework prepare you for this internship?”