**Program**: Geology  
**Assessment Coordinator**: Thor Hansen

**Program Mission:**
We want to develop in our graduate students an appreciation of how geological processes affect the earth and society so that they will be environmentally and geologically responsible, scientifically literate citizens. We strive to produce professionals with an interdisciplinary content background in geology and the physical sciences that are competent in the field, who can work collaboratively, conduct original research, and effectively communicate their results.

**Program Student Learning Goals:**
The goals of the Geology MS degree are to support student learning and improvement in: A) foundational knowledge and skills; B) quantitative skills; and C) critical thinking. It is our expectation that our graduates will apply these as professionals who can integrate chemical, physical, biological, and other specialized knowledge in order to understand geological processes.

**Program Student Learning Objectives:**
To meet the Geology Graduate Program goals, when students graduate from the MS program, they will be able to:

1. Explain and evaluate the theories and concepts of geological science and related disciplines;
2. Design and conduct scientifically-rigorous and relevant scientific research in their chosen environmental discipline;
3. Analyze and interpret scientific data; and
4. Communicate scientific concepts and results effectively through both written and oral means, and to a range of audiences.

**Please respond to the following:**
1. Describe the level of faculty participation on this assessment.

There was select faculty participation; four final written theses were evaluated by their committee members and the results were discussed by the entire faculty at a faculty meeting.

2. Describe the frequency of evaluating the program SLOs.
We developed our graduate program assessment plan in the winter quarter of 2016 and used a measure (Assessment of final written thesis by thesis committee) to make a preliminary assessment of all of our goals and SLO’s in the spring quarter of 2016. We plan to follow best practices and assess all degree or program SLOs twice in a 5-year cycle corresponding with the Graduate Council program review schedule.

3. How are the assessments meaningfully connected to improvement efforts?

The assessment measures directly assess each of our SLOs and the results will be discussed by the entire faculty each year. When we have more data we will identify program weaknesses and implement improvements.

**Student Learning Objectives Assessed This Year:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>SLOs Assessed</th>
<th>Results and Improvements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of final written thesis by thesis committee</td>
<td>1,2,3,4</td>
<td>Faculty evaluated final written theses using a common rubric. Four theses were evaluated and out of 54 questions (6 respondents, 9 rubric questions per respondent) there were 45 excellents and 9 adequates. Three of the four theses are being submitted for publication. We are pleased with these results but recognize they are preliminary. Next year we will assess the written thesis proposals and gather more data on the final written theses before deciding on program changes.</td>
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**Improvements Implemented Since Last Report:**

This is the first year that we have gathered assessment data on our graduate program. We feel the written thesis rubric was informative and the results were very positive, but since only four theses were evaluated, the results are preliminary. We intend to assess the written thesis proposals next year in addition to another round of evaluating the final written theses. This should give us a better understanding of any weaknesses in the program.