2017-2018 Assessment Cycle COLA_Applied Language and Speech Sciences PhD

Mission (due 12/4/17)

University Mission

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette offers an exceptional education informed by diverse worldviews grounded in tradition, heritage, and culture. We develop leaders and innovators who advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the human condition.

University Values

We strive to create a community of leaders and innovators in an environment that fosters a desire to advance and disseminate knowledge. We support the mission of the university by actualizing our core values of equity, integrity, intellectual curiosity, creativity, tradition, transparency, respect, collaboration, pluralism, and sustainability.

University Vision

We strive to be included in the top 25% of our peer institutions by 2020, improving our national and international status and recognition.

College / VP and Program / Department Mission

Mission of College or VP-area
Provide the mission for the College or VP-area in the space provided. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."
The College of Liberal Arts is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The College teaches students to think critically, applying scientific principles and intellectual schema to understand human behavior and society in a diverse world, to express ideas and ideals in a variety of forms, and to understand themselves and others as members of regional and global communities. The intellectual and creative foundations of this enterprise are written and oral communication, analytical and reasoning skills, and the ability to solve problems creatively. Each departmental curriculum presents perspectives from the past, provides an understanding of the present and directs attention to the challenges of the future. As active researchers, faculty in the College work to advance the frontiers of knowledge and our understanding of humanity and the world we live in, and to use that knowledge and understanding to improve the human condition.

Mission of Program / Department
Provide the program / department mission in the space provided. The mission statement should concisely define the purpose, functions, and key constituents. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."
Our mission is to advance knowledge of how human communication works, how it sometimes breaks down, and how breakdowns can be remediated and/or managed.

Attachment (optional)
Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.

Assessment Plan (due 12/4/17)

Assessment Plan (Goals / Objectives, Assessment Measures and Criteria for Success)

Assessment List

Goal/Objective	Students who complete this program will demonstrate a depth and breadth of knowledge within the areas of specialization emphasized in their program of study.(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	

Identifier	Description
Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 4	Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.
Student SI.Student SI 3.KPI 10	Promote a comprehensive chain of research mentoring for graduate students via student-faculty interactions, peer activities, and apprenticeships.

Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
Direct - Comprehensive Exam (graduate level)	Written comprehensive exams will be evaluated by the students' advisory committees which consist of at least 3 members of the departmental graduate faculty. Exams will be rated using a 4 point scale (attached) which evaluates both content knowledge and application of content knowledge. Oral examinations (if required) will be evaluated using the same scale. The goal is that 90% of students will be rated as Competent or above on both aspects of the rubric with 50% of these students rated as exemplary or highly competent.	CODI_Comp_Exam_Rubric.doc

Goal/Objective	Students who complete this program will be able to design a qualitative, experimental or mixed methods research project that has the potential to contribute new knowledge within the students area of specialization.(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
Standards/Outcomes	

Identifier	Description
Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 4	Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.
Student SI.Student	Promote a comprehensive chain of research mentoring for graduate

	SI 3.KPI 10	students via student-faculty interactions, peer activities, and apprenticeships.	

Assessment Measures			

Assessment Measure	**Criterion**	**Attachments**
Direct - Thesis	The final draft of the dissertation and the oral defense of the dissertation will be evaluated by two faculty members other than the dissertation chair using the CODI Investigation Quality Rubric. The goal is that 100% of students will be rated at the proficient level or above with 50% of the dissertations having an analysis strategy and conclusions that meet the requirements of advanced level on the rubric.	CODI_Investigation_Rubric.doc

Goal/Objective	Students who complete this program will demonstrate writing skills sufficient to prepare a manuscript adequate for submission to a peer-reviewed publication within the student's area of specialization.(Imported)
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);
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Identifier	**Description**
Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 4	Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.
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Assessment Measures	

Assessment Measure	**Criterion**	**Attachments**
Direct - Written Assignment	Original research papers submitted for class assignments in at least 2 different seminars within the ALSS program will be evaluated by 2 faculty members independently using the CODI Writing Rubric (attached.) Papers drawn for rating will be from students in at least the second semester but preferably the second year of doctoral study. The goal is that 70% of students evaluated will achieve the effective level or above on all aspects of the CODI writing rubric with 30% of students rated at the outstanding level on 4/6 aspects of	CODI_Writing_Rubric.doc

	the rubric.	

Program / Department Assessment Narrative

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs (student learning) and departments (operations); this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. In the space below, describe the program's or department's overall plan for improving student learning and/or operations (the "assessment plan"). Consider the following:
1) What strategies exist to assess the outcomes?
2) What does the program/department expect to achieve with the goals and objectives identified above?
3) How might prior or current initiatives (improvements) influence the anticipated outcomes this year?
4) What is the plan for using data to improve student learning and/or operations?
5) How will data be shared within the Program/Department (and, where appropriate, the College/VP-area)?

Assessment Process

This year, the ALSS program plans to focus on both assessing and improving the writing abilities of the students admitted to our program at both the beginning of their program and at the end (dissertation stage). We plan to assess the ability of students to design and write up the results of their dissertation project as well as to evaluate the ability of students pre-dissertation stage to demonstrate the writing skills necessary to prepare manuscripts for publication. We have fine-tuned the CODI Writing Rubric to address the deficiencies identified in the previous assessment cycle and have put in place procedures to identify weak writers early in their tenure in the department and direct them to resources on campus that are currently available to address those issues. We plan to use the data we gather to compare a group of students at the beginning of their careers as doctoral students to those at the end of their careers. This should allow us to see how the program is doing in preparing students to not only graduate but to flourish as academic authors in their future positions. We expect that by focusing on more direct writing instruction early in the program, we may improve both the quality of first drafts of dissertation proposals as well as reduce the time to degree for weaker students. The data will be discussed in small groups with current dissertation directors as well as presented to the faculty as a whole.

Results & Improvements (due 9/15/18)

Results and Improvement Narratives

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students who complete this program will demonstrate a depth and breadth of knowledge within the areas of specialization emphasized in their program of study.(Imported)

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Assessment Measure	Criterion
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Assessment Findings	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Direct - Comprehensive Exam (graduate level)	Has the criterion Written comprehensive exams will be evaluated by the students' advisory committees which consist of at least 3 members of the departmental graduate faculty. Exams will be rated using a 4 point scale (attached) which evaluates both content knowledge and application of content knowledge. Oral examinations (if required) will be evaluated using the same scale. The goal is that 90% of students will be rated as Competent or above on both aspects of the rubric with 50% of these students rated as exemplary or highly competent. been met yet?	This objective was not evaluated this assessment period. It will be assessed in the 2018-19 assessment cycle.		

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students who complete this program will be able to design a qualitative, experimental or mixed methods research project that has the potential to contribute new knowledge within the students area of specialization.(Imported)

Goal/Objective	Students who complete this program will be able to design a qualitative, experimental or mixed methods research project that has the potential to contribute new knowledge within the students area of specialization.(Imported)
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Assessment Findings	

Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
Direct - Thesis	Has the criterion The final draft of the dissertation and the oral defense of the dissertation will be evaluated by two faculty members other than the dissertation chair using the CODI Investigation Quality Rubric. The goal is that 100% of students will be rated at the	Five students completed and defended their dissertations during this academic year. On the oral defense, all were rated at the competent level or higher with 3/5 (60%) rated as highly competent. On the final draft of the dissertation, 80%		- Assessment Process: Results Discussed / Shared: While the department did fall short of meeting the assessment goal for this aspect of the PhD program, all 5 students were able to successfully defend their research with 3 at the very highest level of expectation. The one student

		proficient level or above with 50% of the dissertations having an analysis strategy and conclusions that meet the requirements of advanced level on the rubric. been met yet? Not met	(4/5) of the students were rated at the proficient level or above with 40% (2/5) at the advanced level.		who failed to reach the proficient level with their final draft was a non-native speaker of English which perhaps impacted her ability to complete the writing independently. These results were shared with the faculty and the consensus was that this may have been a case of assuming that early signs of struggle were due to the language barrier rather than a lack of comprehension of the research process by the student. The student was ultimately able to successfully defend the research and reflected a better understanding of both the content and the process in the oral defense than was reflected in her writing. Faculty agreed that earlier identification of weaknesses in students should be a goal of the mentors of doctoral students especially those for whom English was a secondary language.

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students who complete this program will demonstrate writing skills sufficient to prepare a manuscript adequate for submission to a peer-reviewed publication within the student's area of specialization.(Imported)

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Assessment Measures		
	Assessment Measure	**Criterion**
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Assessment Findings					
	Assessment Measure	**Criterion**	**Summary**	**Attachments of the Assessments**	**Improvement Narratives**
	Direct - Written Assignment	Has the criterion Original research papers submitted for class assignments in at least 2 different seminars within the ALSS program will be evaluated by 2 faculty members independently using the CODI Writing Rubric (attached.) Papers drawn for rating will be from students in at least the second semester but preferably the second year of doctoral study. The goal is that 70% of students evaluated will achieve the effective level or above on all aspects	This objective was not evaluated during this cycle. Data was gathered but will be used to compare to papers from the 2018-19 academic year to determine if specific improvements were seen due to the interventions put in place.		

		of the CODI writing rubric with 30% of students rated at the outstanding level on 4/6 aspects of the rubric. been met yet?			

Reflection (Due 9/15/18)

Reflection

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs and operations; this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. Recalling this purpose, respond to the questions below.

1) How were assessment results shared in the program / department?
Please select all that apply. If "other", please use the text box to elaborate.
Distributed via email
Presented formally at staff / department / committee meetings (selected)
Discussed informally
Other (explain in text box below)

2) How frequently were assessment results shared?

Frequently (>4 times per cycle)
Periodically (2-4 times per cycle)
Once per cycle (selected)
Results were not shared this cycle

3) With whom were assessment results shared?
Please select all that apply.
Department Head (selected)
Dean / Asst. or Assoc. Dean
Departmental assessment committee (selected)
Other faculty / staff (selected)

4) Consider the impact of prior applied changes. Specifically, compare current results to previous results to evaluate the impact of a previously reported change. Demonstrate how the use of results improved student learning and/or operations.

The doctoral student Learner Objectives (SLO) for this year focused on their writing abilities. However, the medium addressed three aspects of their learning: 1) How well they were able to transmit their ideas via writing (composition), 2)

how well their writing reflected the students' ability to deal with theoretical and abstract ideas (content), and 3) how well they were able to translate the theoretical content into therapeutic/research principles and practices (application). The primary artifacts considered were the five dissertations completed this year within the program. In terms of the written evidence for content, all 5 of the doctoral students were rated at the competent level (5/5) with 4/5 rated as highly competent (80%). In terms of application (as determined from the written product) 5/5 were rated as competent with 4/5 rated as highly competent. These four students were above the proficient level (Advanced) in both content and application, as demonstrated in their writing. In terms of writing as the communicating medium, however, 3/5 students rated as highly competent (60%) with the other 2 students needing more assistance to produce an acceptable written dissertation. Both of these students required more editing and re-writes. However, the dissertation mentors used some of the tools/strategies listed below to assist these two students on written composition:
• The university has an established writing center with hours are extended into evenings to accommodate more graduate students
• Both of the students (one "international" student with English as a second language) were directed to the writing center.
• It was determined that having the students use the writing center during the dissertation process was a bit "late in the game". Consequently, the department has done the following:
o Several of the required ("core") doctoral courses now require weekly reaction papers to theoretical readings. These are shared with the other students in the courses and are reacted to on an individual basis by the faculty member teaching the course.
o One doctoral course now requires students to read two previous dissertations from within ALSS and one other course will begin this practice in 2019
o We now will have judges/evaluators score term papers written by first year doctoral students so that weaknesses in composition, content, or application via writing can be addressed early in the doctoral program.
o To help create a writing culture, a competitive prize will be established in the department offered yearly to doctoral students for the best written product without faculty editing). This can be a term paper, journal submission, proceedings paper, book chapter or other document. A committee will be formed to evaluate the submitted products.

5) Over the past three assessment cycles, what has been the overall impact of "closing the loop"? Provide examples of improvements in student learning, program quality, or department operations that are directly linked to assessment data and follow-up analysis.

Past evaluations have been done anonymously, making it difficult to "close the loop". In future cycles, however, writing evaluations will be tracked by individual doctoral mentors and by faculty during doctoral seminars for the purpose of measuring the success of strategies.
It is clear, however, that awareness of the need to monitor and work with the written medium as a conduit for the three previously described aspects (composition, content, and application) at the beginning of the doctoral program is the primary result of "closing the loop". Accordingly, we have implemented the initiatives listed in the previous question and it has already resulted in greater awareness on the part of the doctoral students and the faculty. Several students have already gone to the writing center, have asked faculty who have reviewed reaction papers this summer and this early fall how to improve, and several faculty members have already prepared tutorials for the doctoral students in their classes by using previous samples and discussing principles of strong writing. As a faculty, we are also implemented the following:
• Sending problematic writers to the writing center earlier
• Track the number of edits required by dissertation directors
• Continue to have additional faculty members evaluate dissertations (at least specific chapters)
• Establish a monthly professional colloquium (in addition to the research colloquium) that is required for all doctoral students and will be a requirement for all doctoral students until they reach candidacy. A two year cycle of topics will be established with at least two related to professional writing.

Attachments (optional)
Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.