

# Lake Forest College

## Assessment of Student Learning 2011

Department / Program \_\_\_\_\_

Department / Program Chair \_\_\_\_\_

### Student Learning Outcome Statements and Assessment Measures

1. Below are listed the Student Learning Outcomes for your major or program as approved by your department in 2010.
2. What methods have you used this year to assess whether majors/minors in your department/program are meeting the above stated student learning outcomes? *Please check all that apply.*

- 7   Alumni surveys
- 22  Evaluation of student work from courses
- 10  Exit interviews with students graduating or leaving the program
- 4  Graduate school acceptance rates
- 1  Locally developed pre-test or post-test for subject matter knowledge
- 4  National examinations assessing subject matter knowledge (please specify)

#### ETS field test

- 5  Portfolio evaluation of student work
- 5  Student graduation/retention rates
- 15  Senior thesis or major project
- 17  Student course evaluations
- 11  Student satisfaction surveys
- 7  Other (please specify)

*Internships, jobs, prizes, honors; Excel training; study abroad; course test data; work in tutorials; individual meetings with students; cross-course homework*

### Assessment Results Analysis

3. Choose one (1) of the student learning outcomes listed in 1) above. Based on your review of the assessment measures you indicated in the outcome, as well as any additional information from other sources listed in 2) above, please discuss:
  - a. How well your majors/minors have achieved the student learning outcome you have chosen to analyze this year. Please be specific.
  - b. Attach any relevant data/artifact analysis to support your statements.

#### **AFA M:**

- Judy Dozier's assessment of two graduating seniors' work with me in the fall of 2010 indicates a complete understanding of racial concepts as they relate to historical periods and changing perspectives on African American culture in the United States. The final projects are available for review in my office.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

#### **AMER:**

- We had no graduates in the major or minor this year, and conducted no formal assessment

#### **AREA:**

- DEMONSTRATING INFORMED KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHOSEN REGION

In 2010-2011 Area Studies had four majors, one of whom graduated in December 2010. One of the four majors completed a senior thesis and another will undertake one next year. One student completed a study abroad program in Berlin. The last Area Studies major is a rising sophomore and has not yet gone far enough in the major to evaluate in this respect yet. Because Area Studies at Lake Forest College is an umbrella for separate specializations by individual students, we have to judge each student's success separately. (See report for list of specific student achievements.)

- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

#### **Art:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- Information on individual students' accomplishments/ successes
- Student satisfaction survey anecdotal responses
  - They mostly find that the introductory courses have served them well, and that they continue to use the skills and information that they learned in these courses
- Need to attach satisfaction survey and analysis of responses
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

#### **ASIA:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- Analysis based on exit interviews with graduating majors and minors
  - Exit interviews with graduating students indicated they are generally satisfied with the Asian Studies courses offered by various departments and programs in the College.
  - They are particularly satisfied with the courses in East Asian history, philosophy, religion, and languages, speaking highly of the "wonderful and phenomenal professors" who provided services in teaching and advising.
  - The strengths of Asian Studies rest in the program's diversified curriculum that enabled them to develop their comprehension of Asian civilization as a form of inquiry and understanding of the complexity of human affairs through a combination of classroom instruction and study-abroad experience. (*outcome #1*)
  - They felt strongly that the particular virtues of majoring or minoring in Asian Studies lie in the program's inter-cultural character, which prepared them to not only value one of the most dynamic and important areas of the world, but also be able to command basic Asian language skills in reading and interpreting Chinese or Japanese; demonstrate independent research abilities in recognizing and evaluating Asian material; display critical thinking capacities in analyzing Asian texts; and use persuasive communication proficiencies within the field of Asian Studies. (*outcomes # 1- 4*)
  - They felt dissatisfied with the lack of an Asian Studies senior seminar, a necessary element that allows them to fulfill their major requirements.
  - Great satisfaction expressed with Beijing study abroad program
- Need to attach exit interview questions and analysis of responses
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

#### **Biology:**

- Report completed. See Senior Survey Analysis documents for 2011. This year's survey indicates particularly strong student confidence in nearly all areas compared with the previous nine years.
- Fourteen biology seniors responded to our survey in 2010-11. Please refer to the attached spreadsheet and summaries of general responses for more detail. (Note: 14 responses is low, increasing the likelihood for some self-selection bias).

- *RATINGS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2010-11*  
Quantitative analysis of the specific questions in the survey indicates an overall positive response from our students. That is, the cumulative average score was 1.52 (compared to 1.62 for last year and 1.80 the year before) on a scale of 1 to 5, using a rating identical to that for course evaluations at LFC (*i.e.*, a rating of 1 is considered most positive or favorable, whereas 5 is least positive). Note: one respondent appears to have entered 5 for 1 and 4 for 2; this was corrected before calculating the means.
- As is typical for this survey, there was some variation in scores for specific questions (see attached spreadsheet), and for this dataset a difference of less than 0.5 in mean score is probably not meaningful, given the magnitude of the standard errors. Thus, with a range of values this year from a low (favorable score) of 1.00 to a high of 2.00, it appears that few of the scores for individual questions differ significantly from the cumulative mean value, nor is there an indication that any aspect of our curriculum is in need of dramatic improvement. In general, the means for most of the questions decreased slightly from last year.
- Below is a rank ordered list of areas that students were especially positive or confident about in 2009-10 (based on mean scores for individual questions of 1.44 or lower). In addition, these items were ranked similarly in previous surveys. Several items showed improvements of 0.30 or more (marked by an asterisk), however none showed declines of this magnitude.
  - Have a good knowledge of what a primary research article is and its purpose (1.00)
  - Can effectively read and comprehend a primary research article (1.14)
  - Have an ability to use modern technology in oral and written scientific presentations (1.14)
  - Have an ability to form a hypothesis to address a scientific question and design an experiment to test that hypothesis (1.29)
  - Have an ability to communicate orally about scientific research (1.29)
  - Have an ability to find and evaluate information from various sources (1.43)
  - Have an ability to integrate information from several articles (1.43)
- Students were least confident in the following areas, which have shown relatively low confidence frequently in the past:
  - Coursework in biology has been good preparation for my future career (1.93)
  - Able to design and carry out an independent research project in a laboratory (2.00)
- In summary, the average scores for all aspects of our curriculum were 2.00 or less, reflecting a high level of student confidence in areas that we emphasize. For instance, perceived strengths reflect a curriculum-wide emphasis on understanding the scientific method and communication, and on quantitative, information and technology literacy.
- As an editorial note, it is somewhat disturbing that some students continue to fail to recognize that their coursework is good preparation for their future careers, though the score for this has decreased in recent years. It is our stance that students are better off understanding how living things work in general, as opposed to teaching them specific factual information they will encounter in medical and graduate school; and that the general goals for the courses we offer, plus the material we are covering, will improve their ability to learn in postgraduate studies because they will see how the medical/graduate school material connects in a bigger picture (in fact, feedback we receive from alumni enrolled in postgraduate studies have confirmed this). Nonetheless, we will discuss strategies to better explain to our students the scope, significance, and value of their undergraduate education in biology. The Career Advancement Center continues to support our efforts, and should continue to find more ways to support the career interests of biology students.

- In general our hard work has paid off as noted in this year's Senior Survey. That is, on the whole our students have more positive and favorable feelings about their experience as Biology majors than in the past few years, and average response scores have increased in a significant number of areas.
- Spreadsheet and other data submitted

### Business:

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- Students were required to take a series of 10 Excel tutorials as part of BUSN 180. A survey administered to the students in order to ascertain their familiarity with Excel pre- and post-BUSN 180 showed striking results. Almost every student indicated that they learned much from the Excel tutorials. They now felt as if they could use Excel in their upper-level classes, an internship, or in a job.
- Need to attach pre- & post survey and analysis of results
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### Chemistry:

- Report Completed. The 2011 Assessment Analysis focuses on Student Learning Outcome 1 in the 2010 Assessment of Student Learning departmental report.
- The faculty in the Chemistry Department evaluated the results of seniors in three courses, using standardized tests prepared by the American Chemical Society. The data acquired in 2009 and 2010 were used to discuss student success in these courses during this last academic year.
- As part of the final exams in physical chemistry, advanced inorganic chemistry and instrumental analysis, the Chemistry Department uses comprehensive subject tests prepared by the American Chemical Society Division of Chemical Education Examinations Institute. The faculty take the scores obtained by students and calculate scores based on the content of the course taught at Lake Forest. Material not covered in the course is not used in the assessment. In some cases, the tests are designed for a two-semester course and the content adjustment must be made.
- Physical chemistry is usually taken in a student's junior year, advanced inorganic usually has a mix of juniors and seniors and instrumental analysis is the senior capstone course for the chemistry major. The Department has noticed recently that a greater number of students are taking physical chemistry in their senior year. This can result in students taking first semester physical chemistry and instrumental analysis concurrently as well as possibly taking second semester physical chemistry concurrently with advanced inorganic.
- Our goal was to examine ACS test results for 2009 and 2010 with previous years to see if any trends in student performance were evident.

#### Data

Table 1. Percentage Scores for Students that were Enrolled in Two Upper-Level Chemistry Courses

Semester	Physical Chemistry	Advanced Inorganic Chemistry	Instrumental Analysis
Fall, 2008	87%		61%
Spring, 2009	77%	75%	
Fall, 2009	92%		68%
Spring, 2010	76%		
Fall, 2010	82%		65%
Spring, 2011	67%	77%	

- As faculty, we have discussed the trend that a greater number of students are taking upper-level course concurrently. The reasons for this vary. Sometimes a student has academic difficulty in a

lower level course and this disrupts the normal sequence that he /she will take. Other times, students decide later to major in chemistry. Our concern, of course, is that their performance in both classes suffers.

- The data indicate that students taking P. Chem. in the fall semester along with Instrumental Analysis have the same pattern of scores in both classes. The scores were lower in 2008; in 2009 the student scores increased. In 2010, student scores decreased in both courses.
- The impact of taking P. Chem. and Advanced Inorganic is less clear because we have fewer years in which to compare data. In addition, Advanced Inorganic is offered only every other year.

**CINE:** no grads NA

**CLAS:**

- The criteria checked under (2.) above are generally combined by way of discussion and interview to provide a critical perspective on student learning outcomes, including satisfaction and individual achievement. We do not use additional formal, written criteria, examinations or other aspects of external curricular requirements. The Classical Studies minor is comprised of 2 elective courses in addition to the 4 core courses of the LFC Program in Greece. We advise students about which elective courses are appropriate, how they fit in with the students' other interests and major programs, and mentor them for the duration of their studies after they return to campus (this function is often distinct from the role of formal academic advisor, with whom the student will be collaborating as part of a major program), including work in tutorials and Independent Scholar or independent study courses specific to students' interests, backgrounds and academic goals. Assessment as per (2.) above takes place to the extent to which the student avails himself or herself of such advising, mentoring and additional course work, and ranges from informal conclusions based on casual inquiry and contact to the kind of full, formal and integrated assessment made possible by the collaborative work of tutorials, IS or appropriate Classical Studies electives. Taken together, the methods and measures checked under (2.) above suggest very positive student learning outcomes, particularly for criteria 1, 2 and 4 under (1.) above. This is especially the case when work for the Classical Studies minor supplements, reinforces or otherwise enriches student work in closely related major programs (e.g. Philosophy, Art, History & etc.).
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

**Communication:** missing

**CSCI:**

- Required format of report not submitted
- Data from ETS CS test reported (outcomes #1 & 2)
  - The 2010-2011 Lake Forest College average of 146 (average of our 6 students) ranks at the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile among all the reported institutional averages. See the attached percentile chart.
  - Students averaged 3 points below national average score
  - For Computer Science there are 3 sub-categories:
    - best for our students - Programming Fundamentals (outcome #2)
    - worst for our students -Computer Organization/Architecture/Operating Systems & Algorithms/Theory/Computational Math (*outcomes #1 & 2*)
  - Our Computer Science majors consistently score better in the Programming Fundamentals category.
- Need to submit required form with all questions answered

**Digital Media Design:**

- Report Completed – data provided and analysis completed for outcome #2 – student course work and student satisfaction survey
- Each ART/CSCI 277 student was required to design and implement a HTML/CSS based portfolio of digital artifacts. 100% of the students completed this task. Seven out of the sixteen students created exemplary websites, thus earning A's on this project. (*outcome #2*)
- When asked the question on a student satisfaction survey: “Have the courses you have taken in Digital Media Design helped you to communicate strategies in written digital media (HTML and CSS) through the creation of complex web sites?” 100% of these students answered affirmatively. (*outcome #2*)
- Attachments-  
 Student Satisfaction Survey  
 The **final portfolio websites** are located at:  
<http://csci.lakeforest.edu/~dmd/>

### Economics:

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- Graduate school acceptance rates were used to examine external attitudes toward our students' level of preparation. Five graduating seniors and one 2009 graduate applied for PhD programs in economics; five of the six were offered admission and accepted. Two of the four were accepted at programs rated in the top 20 with funding; two were accepted at programs rated in the top 60. Two 2009 graduates have been accepted into top programs in public management, and another 2009 graduate applied to graduate programs in environmental management and was accepted by twelve highly-ranked programs.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### Educational Studies:

- Report Completed. Students were assessed for their proficiency with the content area topics listed in *outcome #1* based on answers to final exam questions in the key courses offered in the minor in 2010 – 2011: EDUC 210; EDUC 310; EDUC 320; and EDUC 322. The evaluation of questions on the final exams was assessed on a 4.0 scale. Students achieved at an above average or outstanding level on all relevant items with average scores ranging from 3.18 to 4.0.

#### EDUC 210 spring 2011

Topic	Ave assessment (4.0 scale)	Ave assessment for declared minors
Social Justice and Human Rights	3.8	4
Cultural Perspectives	3.52	3.2
Urban education	3.76	3.6
Global citizenship	4	4
Economic Issues	3.7	4
School reform	3.36	3.4

#### EDUC 310/322 fall 2010 / EDUC 320 spring 2011

Topics	Course	Ave assessment (4.0 scale)	Ave for declared minors
Social Justice & Human Rights/ Educational Reform	EDUC 310	3.18	4
Social justice & Human Rights/ Global Citizenship/ Cultural Perspectives	EDUC 322	3.28	4
Social justice & human rights/ Political Ideology & Power Structures	EDUC 320	3.33	4

## Education:

- Report Completed. Senior education majors were assessed for their achievement of the dispositions listed in outcome #1 above through analysis of electronic portfolio submissions for checkpoint #4 – program exit as well as the students’ performance in the exit interview process for those completing the program in fall 2010 and spring 2011. We use a 3 point scale with 3 = distinguished work exceeding standards, 2 = meets standards, 1 = does not meet standards. We assessed the dispositions of responsiveness, resourcefulness, teacher efficacy, and reflective self-assessment. For fall 2010, the mean scores for these dispositions were: 2.14; 2.71; 2.43; and 2.43. For spring, 2011, the mean scores for these dispositions were: 2.38; 2.75; 2.50; and 2.62. Overall, graduating seniors demonstrated a particular strength in responsiveness, teacher efficacy and reflective self-assessment.
- Specific portfolio assessment data submitted and analyzed with graphic evidence.

### Fall 2010 Senior Portfolio Exit Assessment

	Distinguished (3 pts)	Meets (2 pts)	Does not meet (1 pts)	Mean	Mode	Stdev
Resourcefulness	1	6	0	2.14	2	0.35
Responsiveness	5	2	0	2.71	3	0.45
Teacher Efficacy	3	4	0	2.43	2	0.49
Reflective Self-assessment	3	4	0	2.43	2	0.49



### Spring 2011 Senior Portfolio Exit Assessment

	Distinguished (3 pts)	Meets (2 pts)	Does not meet (1 pts)	Mean	Mode	Stdev
Resourcefulness	3	5	0	2.38	2	0.48
Responsiveness	6	2	0	2.75	3	0.43
Teacher Efficacy	4	4	0	2.50	3	0.50
Reflective Self-assessment	5	3	0	2.62	3	0.48



**English Literature:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- The success of our students is consistent and formidable; our senior seminar papers are of high quality, and in each and every case in the literature seminar we have seen demonstrable improvement in student work in understanding of the critical tradition.

Our thesis students also succeed, many receiving honors; together, these modalities demonstrate a competence in our field. Each major must pass a terminology exam, and our senior seminars and thesis experiences enable our students to produce their own succinct-yet-insightful critical analyses.

Our redesigned senior survey now tracks satisfaction with the major according to specific vectors. In the responses, we find that our objectives are being met. Here is a sampling: “I have really enjoyed it and I love the way we learned how to analyze, think critically and write effectively. These are skills...”; “I feel like I have a general knowledge of literature and tradition to carry me where I want to go.”

- Need to submit appropriate documentation and analysis of data

**English Writing:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- The success of our students is consistent and formidable; our senior portfolios are of high quality, and in each and every case in the writing seminar, in particular, we have seen demonstrable improvement in student work across a spectrum of narratological and poetic place marks.

Our thesis students also succeed, many receiving honors; together, these modalities demonstrate a competence in our field. Each major must pass a terminology exam, and our senior seminars and thesis experiences enable our students to produce their own creative works

Our redesigned senior survey now tracks satisfaction with the major according to specific vectors. In the responses, we find that our objectives are being met. Here is a sampling: “I have really enjoyed it and I love the way we learned how to analyze, think critically and write effectively. These are skills...”; “I feel like I have a general knowledge of literature and tradition to carry me where I want to go.”

- Need to submit appropriate documentation and analysis of data

**Environmental Studies:** missing**Finance:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- Since the finance major is brand new (April 2010), we only had two graduates this spring. However, both performed very well in their upper level classes as specified in *outcome #3*. One of them (Jordan Cutler) was accepted into a highly-rated graduate program in accounting at the University of Michigan.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

**First Year Studies:**

- Report Completed. The attached survey indicates that in the Fall of 2010 61% of First-Year Studies students agreed that their writing had improved as a result of instruction in the course; that 14% thought that their writing had not improved as a result of instruction in FIYS. See attached table of the survey results.

- The average grades for three writing assignments for most sections indicate satisfactory results. See attached table of grades.
- A student survey, administered annually, which includes a question about writing in First-Year Studies.
- The averages of grades on three writing assignments, from most sections of First-Year Studies. The first grade is for the summer writing assignments, followed by two other grades later in the semester for papers that were taken to the Writing Center for revision.
- **Average Grades for Writing FIYS 2010**

course	Assignment		
	Summer	One	Two
1	68	75	78
2			
3	78	80.22	81.47
4			
5			
6			
7	84.3	83.05	86
8	70	88	89
9	79.1	77.9	77.2
10			
11	69.76	82.7	82
12			
13	79.78	77.11	85.06
14	72.2	78.07	81.16
15	84.23	87.4	83.83
16		85	82
17	83.9	82.4	83.1
18	79	83	80
19			
20	79.68	80.33	84.4
21	68.6	76.18	86.53

- FR Satisfaction Survey results submitted

### History:

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- The course also set up some detailed assignments for students to accomplish to address *outcomes #1 & 2*. During the semester, for example, each student is required to write two discussion papers that set up issues, point up controversies, and provide background for class discussion; two short papers that focus on the analysis of primary sources; and one longer research paper of 20-25 pages that probes a particular theme in greater depth, or examines a topic that follows over the course. The paper must consist of both primary source research and engagement with the relevant secondary literature. The ultimate goal of these assignments is to encourage students who are interested in historical studies to develop the capacity and ability to use their analytical skills to engage in additional research in the future, no matter whether they choose to enter a graduate program or end up with a public service career (*History 420: China, Japan, and the West*).
- Senior students in History 420 made collective achievements by fulfilling the course assignments. Most of them are able to extract meaning from primary source material; summarize the principal ideas of readings used in the class; evaluate the merits of readings based on critical and analytical criteria; participate actively in class discussions with independent ideas; respect opinions different from their own; deliver effective presentations in class; and write a

sophisticated final paper with logical assumptions and balanced arguments. The average GPA achieved by students in History 420 is A-, a grade that is consistent with previous years.

- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### **International Relations:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- According to its chair, the International Relations Program does not have in place at this time a reliable and comprehensive assessment tool of student learning, although the general comments submitted relate to *outcomes #1, 2 & 4*.
- The IR Program tracks graduation rates. In 2011, 22 students graduated from the College with degrees in international relations. This compares to 22 in 2010 and 31 in 2009. The Department also tracks the number of students who undertake the senior thesis and keeps tabs on the “distinction rate” among them. In 2011, five students completed senior theses, and three earned distinction. In 2010, six did so, and all but one earned distinction. In 2009, seven students completed theses and three earned distinction. The GPAs of international relations majors in recent years are impressive: 3.44 in 2011, up slightly from 3.38 in both 2010 and 2009.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### **Islamic World Studies:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- One measure of the success of our program is that several of this year’s graduates are continuing to work in the field of Islamic Studies. One student is currently enrolled in an intensive one-year Arabic language course in Amman, Jordan, hoping to use her areas of concentration in Islamic Studies and Politics to ultimately work in the Middle East. Another student who worked as a spring intern at the Field Museum in Chicago, has a fulltime job working with artifacts from Arabic-speaking cultures in their History and Cultures department. Her supervisors at the Field Museum were extremely impressed with the breadth of knowledge about Islamic cultures and civilizations this student brought to her work.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### **Latin American Studies:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- Only one LNAM major graduated in 2011. That student’s course work indicated the necessary familiarity and breadth indicated in *outcome #1*.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### **Legal Studies:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- At this point, we do not have the empirical data in place for an analysis of one particular outcome but we know that the Introduction to Legal Studies course covers all 5 Student Learning Outcomes. It will be the foundation for assessing the student learning outcomes.
- *Outcome Statement #3--* each course has term paper/writing assignments requiring legal research and analysis. For example, the Introduction to Legal Studies course examined the state of Oregon’s denial of a death row inmate’s request to donate his organs (alleged violation of due process) and the Judiciary course examined the appellate case law regarding the challenge to Rahm Emanuel’s residency qualification to run for the mayor of Chicago. The Civil Liberties course examined whether the 1965 Voting Rights Act, as amended, can still constitutionally require southern states to report minor voting procedural changes. All students researched and used case law to respond to these questions of law.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### **Mathematics:**

- Required format of report not submitted
- The 2010-2011 Lake Forest College average of 164 (average of our 11 students) ranks at the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile among all the reported institutional averages.
  - The subject exams are broken down into sub-categories. For Mathematics, there are 5 sub-categories:
    - best for our students – Calculus, Algebra, Routine (*outcome #2*)
    - worst for our students - Non-routine, Applied (*outcome #1*)
- Our graduates are generally above average in most of these categories. But, virtually in every year, our students score better in the top 3 categories listed than in the bottom 2.
- Need to submit required form with all questions answered

### **Modern Languages and Literature:**

- Spanish majors in Lois Barr's senior seminar were asked to make a 15-20 minute oral presentation in Spanish with Powerpoint presentation to illustrate research on a cultural/literary topic relevant to the course. They also led discussion with the class in Spanish afterwards. Both the instructor and another member of Spanish faculty (George/ Meneses/ Scarampi) or Dept. Chair Cynthia Hahn were in attendance for each final presentation session. Afterwards, the instructor made an assessment of each student's oral competence, taking into account accurate cultural contextualization of material, and discussed this level with the other instructor in attendance for additional input on student level. Students were assessed and feedback on their level was provided to them. (*outcome #1*)
- Results indicate that our students have achieved on average higher than the minimum level required by our departmental major standard as set forth in the learning outcome. Supporting instrument, ACTFL guidelines, and 2011 Spanish student results submitted (which include *outcome #2*, Writing Proficiency).
- Could use more complete data analysis using summary description statistics

### **Music:**

- Report Completed. Spreadsheet submitted, the six graduating seniors in Music scored well on the ETS MFT this year: in all areas, they outperformed both their cohort from last year and the national average. On the composite score, our students averaged 156, where last year's students averaged 141. A similar jump was seen in the three sub-scores—Listening, Theory, and History.
- In some specific cases, students' performances on this test were skewed from their typical performance in their music classes. To give a specific example, Perron's music GPA was nearly a 4.0, and yet she performed near the bottom of her cohort on this test, well below Hilgenberg, who averaged closer to B's
- spreadsheet submitted

**Neuroscience:** missing

### **Philosophy:**

- Criterion 5: ability to engage in creative philosophical efforts: We continue to be impressed with our student's creative efforts. Our emphasis on a broad vision of philosophy is evident in the range of senior projects, from an existential novel to a discussion of same-sex marriage. Once again, faculty were generally impressed with the approaches students developed to their topics. Even research projects have usually involved the elaboration of an interesting response to the question. Our students, in symposium presentations (for research projects) and thesis defenses are generally able to handle challenges from faculty. Given our new assessment process, we will highlight connections to more traditional philosophical theories. We have often seen evidence of this, but it has not been a focus in the oral presentations/defenses.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### Physics:

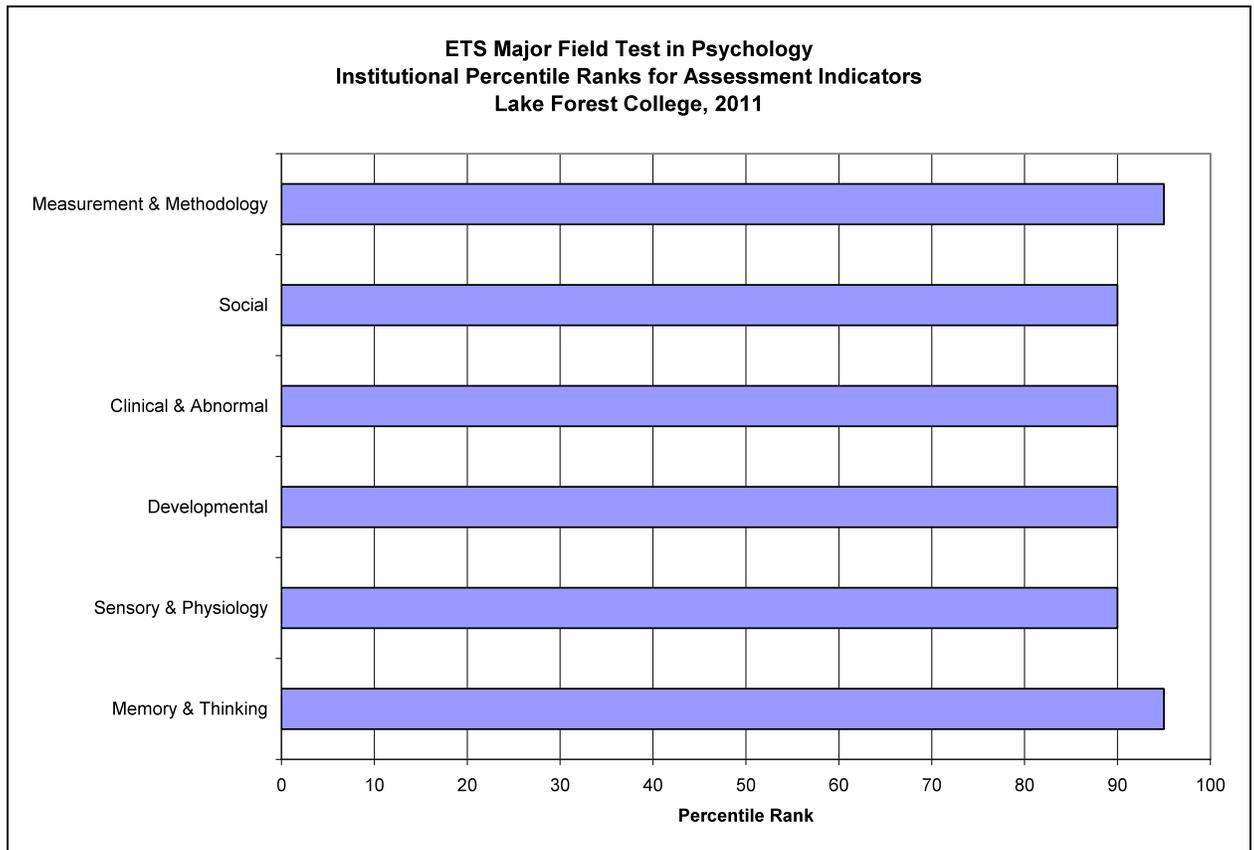
- Report Completed. We give the assessment exam (**locally developed post-test**) as part of our Senior Seminar, which we can offer only every other year. Thus the juniors in the class have not taken Electricity and Magnetism (Phys 310) and only some may have not taken Thermodynamics (Phys 330). We separately score each topic (mechanics/relativity, quantum mechanics, electricity & magnetism, and thermodynamics) on our assessment exam. The scores for the various topics are similar for the two groups of students except for Electricity and Magnetism questions, where the juniors scored significantly poorer. The best scores are typically for quantum mechanics, which is probably due to the freshness of the material in their minds, since it is offered in the same year as the Senior Seminar. The overall average scores are similar to a top quartile score on the GRE physics subject test, which is similar to our in-house exam.
- Data attached

### Politics:

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- The Department of Politics does not have in place at this time a reliable and comprehensive assessment tool of student learning.
- The Department tracks graduation rates. In 2011, 27 students graduated from the College with a degree in politics. This compares to 28 in 2010 and 32 in 2009. The Department also tracks the number of students who undertake the senior thesis and keeps tabs on the “distinction rate” among them. In 2011, Politics graduated four students who earned the senior thesis, three of whom also earned distinction. In 2010, two students wrote senior theses, and one received distinction. In 2009, the figures are four and two respectively. The GPAs of Politics majors are in the “B” range, falling to 3.07 in 2011 from 3.09 in 2010 and 3.14 in 2009. Yet this data tells us nothing about the individual learning experiences of politics majors.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

### Psychology:

- Reported Completed. Student Learning *Outcome #1*: As a group, this year’s senior psychology majors demonstrated very high levels of familiarity with concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology as measured by the ETS Major Field test in Psychology.
- Lake Forest’s average score this year was 171, which placed it in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile among the 365 institutions nationwide whose psychology seniors took the test. This year our seniors excelled in every area (see below) and, for the fifth year in a row, Lake Forest’s average on the “Measurement and Methodology Assessment” Indicator (research methods and statistics), was in the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile or better.
- Graphic representation of ETS Field Test scores submitted (see below)



### Religion:

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- We graduated two Religion majors and approximately 8 Religion minors. Both these students completed senior research projects. In framing these projects and completing the research and analysis, these senior students brought together the methodological skills and theoretical knowledge they had gained in their previous religion courses about religious traditions and communities.
- In their evaluations of courses and instructors, religion students reported a high satisfaction with the teaching and structures for learning in their religion classes.
- Some data presented, but there is a need to systematically analyze data collected:

### SOAN:

- In a review of the work product of our students we can reach two basic conclusions. First, these students are performing high-quality work that is insightful, creative and relevant. The work reflects a keen awareness of the intellectual roles of anthropology and sociology in describing and understanding the social world around us. Students have shown excitement regarding the disciplines and their utility in both reflective portfolios performed in Senior Seminars and in faculty directed Senior Theses. Reflective portfolios are especially telling in the general linking theme of “How SOAN explains it all.” Most reflective portfolio essays detail a growth in student realization as to how these disciplines wend their way through much of the rest of the Liberal Arts Curriculum. Specific moments of insight are plentiful and life-changing.
- Second, a bit more troubling, is the lack of depth with which our students address theoretical frameworks. This is, frankly, not a new thing in these disciplines. Historically there has been a push toward a more “pastiche” approach to theory. I believe, however, that while trendy, it should not be at the expense of a full understanding of theory – complete with bases, biases, and applications. As example, the two Senior Theses of McGinley and Isoaho were comparable in their high quality of data collection. The difference emerged when theoretical issues were

brought to bear in the analyses. This marked the difference between “Thesis” and “Distinction” in the minds of the SOAN faculty on these committees. We discussed these differences afterwards and agreed that the importance of theoretical frames needed to be more emphasized within the courses of our curriculum.

- Theses: Erin McGinley and Eemeli Isoaho both did significant field based theses (Jamaica & Bolivia respectively; Eemeli earned distinction), and Libby Wait did a solid content analysis and historical discussion of hip hop.
- Syndhia Javier did a senior research project on the African American history of Lake Forest and began a dedicated archive to continuing work on that history.
- In 320, Blaine Horner did some nice field research on the social norms of text messaging, and Aimee Halstuk did a good project on the effects of technology on the social position of people with disabilities which she will be using to spring board a senior project (she's got a couple credits left to do) - both earned A's on their research and final papers.
- SOAN480 provided five outstanding reflective essays that addressed the disciplinary similarities and differences as well as the process of learning to “think” like a sociologist/anthropologist. Those essays were written by Safina Lavjie, Erin McGinley, John Fosdick, and Libby Wait.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

**Social Justice:** no grads NA

**Theater:**

- No specific data from student course work on outcomes
- The senior thesis project by theater/education major Catherine Cudahy ‘11 provided a good example of *outcome #1*.
- Cudahy’s senior thesis “Children’s Theater Across the Curriculum: Filling in the Gaps” (attached) demonstrated strong research and analytic skills that can in part be attributed to the rigorous training in peer reviewed research and textual analysis that she received in such courses as THTR 255 Dramaturgy and THTR 231-232 Theater History I and II.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

**Urban Studies:**

- Because the Urban Studies program has only recently been revised, we have relatively few minors. In 2011, two seniors graduated with the minor: Tyler Lawrence and Steven Yena. For both men, we met specifically about their internship choices. For Tyler, his internships were both with a local politician. While one credit focused on the politics of urban campaigning, the second credit had Tyler doing community outreach and helping serve the community after the politician was elected. Steve's internships addressed the problems of local food production in urban areas and the effects of pesticide use and community activism. In addition to his internships, Steve did a field school in Falmouth, Jamaica which required him to work with the local community to help restore and preserve their historic homes.
- Need to address outcomes directly with appropriate collection and analysis of data

**Women and Gender Studies:** missing

4. How has your department/program used results from assessing your student learning outcomes to improve services, courses, and programs for students in the academic year 2010-2011? What plans do you have for improvements in 2011 – 2012?

**AFAM:** The program may be combined with the American Studies program pending approval from the full faculty. Should this change take place, a complete reevaluation of the independent projects, as well as courses and programs will be undertaken. This alliance will help to expand the program into a major course of study for interested students.

## **American Studies: NA**

**Area Studies:** Area Studies does not offer any courses under its own rubric. Instead, it is a program that provides a structure for students who want to integrate material from a variety of disciplines. This past year we experimented with bringing all Area Studies majors together. Students found it interesting to meet other students who were creating their own specializations, and perhaps took some comfort from the tales of woe and success of other students. But in fact, because there is no common subject matter in Area Studies, such gatherings of majors seem of limited use. Advising is the key to the Area studies program. Each student needs close individual advising, both from specialists in the various departments and from an overall advisor (the chair of Area Studies or a designated representative) who can help the student think about their overall program and emphasize making connections across disciplines.

Area Studies will also be a small major and a multi-furcated one. It is important to keep a flexible structure that will allow this major to serve a handful of students who want to be able to focus in depth on some country or region of the world.

**Art:** Students are quite concerned with studio space and course offerings. We have this year been able to address both of these concerns. The painting/drawing studio has been expanded; this allowed for a small design room to be created below the studio, and for the Department to create a new printmaking studio in the old design space. Thus we are not only addressing students' demands for more course offerings but also adding as much space as was possible given our limited arrangement in Durand.

We have also successfully applied for an Asian scholar (a post-doc) to teach several courses in Asian art history; this is also something that students have requested.

Our new website will allow us to show more student work, and to showcase more student successes.

Our improvements for 2011-12 include creating a series of questions for our assessment instrument that will reflect outcomes corresponding to the new outcome statement (above).

We will be offering a brand new course in printmaking on campus, and many of our students will be participating in the "Loop" program, thus allowing them to take more varied art courses at Columbia College.

In the coming year, we are planning several visiting artist lectures/ exhibitions that will give students more exposure to a variety of artists.

The main issue for us continues to be a small number of allocations that limits the number and kinds of classes. As long as our cuts continue, I do not expect that students will be satisfied.

**Asian Studies:** In the academic year 2010-2011, results from student assessments were reviewed and discussed by the Asian Studies faculty in departmental meetings. Through these discussions we reached an agreement that, as an interdisciplinary program, Asian Studies should continue to provide students with a diversified curriculum aimed at cultivating cultural awareness. We also came to the conclusion that we must take seriously students' demands for language training with a special emphasis on the upper-level Chinese and Japanese language courses. Our next step is to use our assessments of student learning as a vehicle by which we develop a standardized form of evaluation. This will allow us to better identify the program's curricular strengths and weaknesses. This will enable us to better adapt our teaching methods and strategies around the particular needs of students in Asian Studies.

**Biology:** We continue to discuss and develop ways to address students' weaknesses in quantitative skills, evident on course assignments and exams and in the students' own perceptions indicated on the Senior Survey. These include plans for working on quantitative skills in introductory courses, implementation of a new course for 2011-2012 (Biol 150), and using the Toledo test to screen students who are not yet ready for Biol 120, giving them a year to work on their quantitative and general college study skills before moving into Biol 120. These students will take Chem 114, Biol 150, and certain sections of the Biol 13x series.

Biol 120, in turn, will be revised slightly, given that the weakest students will no longer be taking it in the first year. We need to pay close attention to outcomes in Biol 120 in particular, and to ways we can continue to assess and respond to students' needs in developing quantitative skills.

**Business:** We will continue to bolster our teaching of Excel. We plan on introducing more labs into FIN 237 and BUSN 230 at the very least. In our next alumni survey we will ask questions regarding Excel preparation.

**Chemistry:** The Chemistry Department is monitoring these data for advising purposes. In addition, the individual faculty members are talking more consistently about individual student achievement. In 2011-2012, we will again collect data and may ask students to comment on their experience of taking these courses concurrently. We are already managing exam schedules etc.

For the 2011-2012 academic year, Chemistry will continue to add to the data of this study and will also look at the three years of the Toledo exam and the results of student in Chem. 1145 and those that go on to Chem. 115 the following year.

**Cinema Studies:** NA

**Classical Studies:** Principally by providing critical feedback to the on-campus Greek Civilizations 201 instructor and the 3 guest instructors on site in Greece, concerning methods and materials that students would like to see integrated into the off-campus program and which the faculty collectively view as positive expansion of or innovation to the existing curricula of the 4-course program. The Classical Studies chair has also worked to include (and cross-list) as many courses as deemed reasonable and applicable from diverse departments and programs in the regular LFC curriculum as potential electives for the minor program.

**Communication:** missing

**CSCI:** NA

**Digital Media Design:** Having only been established last Spring, the Digital Media Design minor is still in its infancy. We are still utilizing funding from the innovation pool and we are continuing to build the program. While we are happy with the results we received from this year's students, our primary objective is to continue to make improvements to the minor. The main way we hope to improve the minor for next year is in refining the capstone course (Art/CS 277) utilizing the lessons learned from this past semester. In our student satisfaction survey two of the five students reported that although they answered yes to the question: "Have the courses you have taken in Digital Media Design helped you to communicate strategies in written digital media (HTML and CSS) through the creation of complex web sites?" they went on to say that they are not yet 100% confident in their ability to create *complex* HTML and CSS websites. This shows that there is room for improvement. We are aiming to add more advanced material to the course as well as one additional website project before the end of the semester. This additional website project will give students more of an opportunity to put their knowledge to work and therefore increase their confidence with HTML and CSS.

**Economics:** Student interest in graduate school has led us to increase courses that prepare students for advanced work, notably courses in game theory and mathematical economics, that were previously offered infrequently or not at all.

**Educational Studies:** Having looked at the data from the student course evaluations from previous years, we felt a need to add more Educational Studies course offerings to our schedule. With the expanded schedule for Prof. Odugu in 2010-2011, we were able to offer more courses than in previous years. The response, based on assessment of course evaluations this year, has been overwhelmingly positive. Students praise these courses as just the kind of interdisciplinary perspective on educational issues that should be the hallmark of a liberal arts approach to these topics.

In order to improve in 2011 – 2012, Prof. Odugu has been appointed to a full time one year position, with the hope that we will be able to move him to a tenure track position. This will allow us to continue to offer this broader range of Educational Studies courses, and possibly even expand on offerings in the future. In addition, with Prof. Sherman returning from sabbatical leave, we are able to offer her popular and well reviewed course on Educational Reform (EDUC 212) in fall 2011. This will also address the slightly lower assessment results for this topic that our data revealed for 2010 – 2011.

**Education:** Having looked at the data from the exit process in previous years and our alumni surveys and meetings, we felt a need to focus students more concretely on resources necessary for success in each individual certification program within the major. In order to address this need, we created a new course, EDUC 422. This course is designed to provide K-12 candidates in French, Spanish and Visual Art with coursework and clinical experiences that more specifically meet their needs as compared to taking the previous required course, EDUC 420, which only focuses on secondary methods of instruction rather than K-12 instructional design. This course will be offered for the first time in fall 2011. In addition, to address needs expressed by alumni for more preparation on how to analyze and use student achievement data to improve instruction, we added a session for both elementary and secondary senior seminars with an expert guest speaker on how teachers use data to inform instruction. It was well received, and students found it useful.

In order to continue to improve in 2011- 2012, we are coordinating more closely among the instructors of the various discipline specific sections for EDUC 420 and EDUC 422 to be sure to address the needs of each certification program while providing necessary support to increase resourcefulness for all candidates. We are also continuing to refine and session on teachers using data to inform instruction to make it even more useful to students next fall.

Two additional major changes will take place in 2011- 2012. First, with the beginning of the MAT program next fall, we will continue to refine our assessments and courses to meet the more advanced requirements for these candidates. EDUC 501 Introduction to Teacher Research will be offered for the first time in Summer I in 2012. Secondly, the Illinois State Board of Education, which sets the standards for teacher certification which our majors must meet, has revised the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards. We will be realigning and revising our programs to be sure that we are meeting these new standards. New matrices that show how each standard is being met by course assessments will be created and implemented in all course syllabi.

**English (literature and writing):** We continue to modify our course palette based upon student interest, and we used 2009-10 assessment mechanism to introduce a new American Literature sequence, a series of new and revised upper-level literature courses, and new 300-level writing courses. We will again offer our editing courses during 2011-12, based upon student interest.

**Environmental Studies:** missing

**Finance:** Student comments on course evaluations were used to increase the level of rigor in Fin 385; to push the adjunct faculty member in Fin 337 to be more available for help; and to create a new course, Fin 365 (Fundamental Equity Analysis) as a response to student interest.

**FIYS:** The results of the survey were not available until the fall course had been completed. The grades for the three assignments were not examined until the summer of 2011. After both instruments were made available, the Director of Writing Programs and the Director conferred. A newly hired Writing Assistant has been charged with working more closely with students in FIYS, especially in organizing writing workshops for individual sections of FIYS in the Fall of 2011. Students in Fall 2011 with discernible deficiencies in writing will, partly as a result of the survey from 2010, be placed in a section of College Writing 100 in Spring 2012. Students must now “earn their way out of” this course, by demonstrating to their FIYS instructor that they have sufficiently profited from writing instruction in FIYS. If they show by means of their FIYS writing assignments that they do not need College Writing 100, they may drop the course for the Spring.

**History:** In 2010-2011, the Department of History used various approaches to improve services, courses, and programs for students. We encouraged faculty members to use the student course evaluations to learn student views and use them as the basis for improvement.

In addition to the course evaluations, we also organized a subcommittee in the Department in charge of the senior assessment. Led by Anna Jones and Robert Morrissey, the subcommittee conducted a comprehensive investigation into peer colleges’ assessment reports in a history major. At the heart of these efforts is the goal of learning from our peers about what worked well in the history major’s curricular offerings and what might benefit from improvement.

We are now in the process of revising a Senior History Majors Survey instituted by the Department in the past, using it as an assessment instrument in the future.

In relation to this endeavor, we plan to undertake a full-scale review of the whole History curriculum, with special emphasis on introductory courses, greater articulation in the major, and devising some sort of distribution requirement across the various geographical areas of the world and types of history.

**IREL:** Going forward, the International Relations Program will rely on the following metrics to assess student learning: a local standardized exam in the core sub-disciplines of economics, history, IR theory, and sociology and anthropology; a portfolio for elective (or concentration) courses; a revised survey for graduating students *and* a voluntary face-to-face exit interview with the chair; data on the number of majors and minors, overall GPAs and GPAs the major, and the number of completed senior theses. The Department is also interested gathering data on recent graduates (i.e. two years and five years after graduation).

**Islamic World Studies:** In response to students’ comments, the Islamic World Studies Committee revised the Requirements for the Minor and the list of courses offered in this program. Specifically, these revisions were intended to eliminate the duplication of material in different courses and to create a group of courses that would build and deepen students’ expertise in Islamic Studies. The revised set of requirements offers students greater flexibility in creating a minor focused on their particular interests.

Next year will be a year of transition for the Islamic World Studies Program. This year, we lost an adjunct professor in Islamic history who helped build the program; a postdoctoral fellow in anthropology, media studies, and southeast Asian Islam; a fulltime International Politics professor with a specialization in Turkey; and two Arabic instructors. Next year, we will have an adjunct professor teaching two beginning level Islam and religion courses, an adjunct professor teaching Arabic language courses, and a visiting emerita Politics professor teaching four courses. We hope that this group of

courses will carry our Islamic Studies students through till we are able to hire fulltime faculty with expertise in Islamic Studies again.

**Latin American Studies:** Some faculty members feel that “LNAME has become an appendage of the Spanish program. Most of the courses are cross-listed SPAN/LNAME and very few faculty members show any interest in the program.” The faculty are working on revising a program assessment tool to get more useful information from students.

**Legal Studies:** During the 2011-12 academic year, the LS minor program will communicate at the beginning and end of the semester with each faculty member teaching a LS minor course to determine what outcomes have been achieved. A copy of the Student Learning Outcomes will be forwarded to each faculty member teaching a LS minor course.

During the 2011-12 academic year, we will institute a survey and exit interview with graduating LS minors.

**Mathematics: NA**

**Modern Languages and Literature:** Based on the success of the oral proficiency (in cultural context) tool developed this spring, our department met for 3 hours as a post-semester assessment retreat, to discuss implementation of this tool for next year, develop a similar tool for French majors, and discuss results of the largely positive student satisfaction surveys in both French and Spanish (see attached result summaries of these).

From student satisfaction surveys, we determined that some kind of further guidelines or on-line placement tools would enhance student placement in courses. During the departmental retreat noted above, we discussed ways to design such an on-line placement exam that would serve as a guide for incoming (and/or current) students for proper placement. We hope to test this on students during the next academic year after its development for probable implementation in spring/summer 2012.

As we have a new faculty member coming in French/Spanish in fall 2011 (Daniel Hanna), we expect that our curriculum will over time reflect some new courses and pedagogical approaches regarding use of technology to enhance language/literature/culture learning. Our assessment of seniors will continue to be developed as our program develops. We will meet again this fall to follow up on the assessment discussion and implementation begun this spring, as well as discussion of on-line placement tools and future curricular development. The subcommittee members could perhaps provide some support for on-line placement tools if they have expertise in this area.

We believe we are doing an excellent job assessing our majors at all levels through the tools and methods described in learning outcomes in the first section. The language learning process embraced by our faculty involves constant assessment and feedback as an integrated and essential component of all our all major and minor programs in Modern Languages & Literatures.

**Music:** As for specific plans: in 2011–12, we are adding a new course to our music major curriculum, Music Theory III, extending the required length of our theory curriculum by one semester. We implemented this change last year after our self-assessment (in conjunction with our ARRC review) revealed a weakness in our students’ abilities in theory. The results of this change won’t be evident in the ETS-MFT until 2013 or so. We will probably wait until then, at least, before making any other changes to our curriculum. In the meantime, we will be occupied with launching a new major in Music Education, which will require all our revisionist energy for the next two years.

**Neuroscience:** missing

**Philosophy:** After a recent departmental review and the resulting curricular changes, we have been in implementation mode. I have notified next year's SAC that we will seek to assess again and consider changes in 2011-12. We do have more students interested in grad school, and we will continue to work on upper level opportunities to provide the preparation needed. Needless to say, this has been an issue for students, and we now regularly offer more 300 level courses (especially in the analytic tradition, which we had not covered until recently.)

Assessments from senior majors continue to be positive, highlighting the strength, commitment, and diversity of the faculty. Concerns include the need for more contemporary advanced courses, which we are trying to accommodate.

**Physics:** Past exams suggested a particular weakness in thermodynamics and Mike Kash made a concerted effort to address this in when he taught that course in spring 2007. The 2008 and 2010 tests showed good results for this topic, so Mike's changes appear to have been effective.

The 2008 exam indicated a weakness in mechanics/relativity. This was likely due to the fact that 10 of the students in that year's Seminar took mechanics with Tae Kim, who was my sabbatical replacement in the 2005-2006 academic year and who, by most accounts, did not do a very good job. The results from 2010 (attached) show a return to a normal average.

We are slowly accumulating data for our graduates and so are reluctant to make significant changes in the exam lest we invalidate our baseline. We are trying to spend more time on the most important topics to ensure that our majors have a firm grasp of fundamental material, though this means that the brightest students (who do not need this extra time) will not be exposed to as many topics.

**Politics:** Going forward, the Department of Politics will rely on the following metrics to assess student learning: the ETS standardized exam in political science; a revised survey for graduating students *and* a voluntary face-to-face exit interview with the chair; data on the number of majors and minors, overall GPAs and GPAs the major, and the number of completed senior theses. The Department is also interested gathering data on recent graduates (i.e. two years and five years after graduation). I welcome the opportunity to speak with members of the Assessment Subcommittee about how the Department can further improve its assessment tools.

**Psychology:** We regularly use informal assessment activities to tweak the curriculum. Over the past several years, for example, those of us teaching Psychology Senior Seminars had been struck by the difficulty our seniors were having when writing their final papers (e.g., when conducting PsycINFO literature searches and when trying to integrate the findings of many different studies into their final papers). Faculty teaching some of the 300-level courses had also noticed that students were struggling with literature searches and were often finding it difficult to apply the methodological principles they had learned in Research Methods & Statistics (PSYC 221-222) to specific studies. Accordingly, one faculty member designed a new assignment that guided his students, working in small groups, through targeted literature searches, structured analyses of individual studies, and ultimately through oral presentations of overall trends, including methodological critiques. The results have been extremely encouraging. Students in that course (PSYC 350) have been producing much better work, and the skills they have been acquiring appear to be transferring to student performance in senior seminars (e.g., the Spring Semester 2011 senior seminar instructor reported that the students who had learned to make comparative summary tables in PSYC 350 wrote the best literature review papers in their Senior Seminar). Other instructors are now starting to incorporate similar assignments into their 300-level courses.

We also make revisions based on more formal assessment results. For example, every spring on our Senior Exit Questionnaire, psychology majors are asked to indicate the extent to which the psychology program helped them meet various goals (e.g., master the theories and principles of psychology, become a better writer, and prepare for a career). Over the years, ratings on most of these items have been very high, suggesting that students believe the psychology program is doing what it is designed to do. The lowest ratings, however, have been on the “prepare for a career” item. In addition, when asked later in the questionnaire about possible gaps in the curriculum (i.e., which psychology courses, if any, they wished had been offered here), students have listed mostly applied psychology courses. The Psychology Department began to address this concern several years ago, first by expanding and strengthening the internship program. Then, in 2009-10, we hired a Community Psychologist. She began teaching Community Psychology (PSYC 355) in 2010-11 and will teach an applied psychology senior seminar (PSYC 470: Gender-Based Violence) in 2011-12. We just hired another new tenure-track faculty member who will help us expand our applied offerings even further. For example, she will be teaching a new vocational psychology course (PSYC 208: Psychology of Career Development) in 2011-12.

**Religion:** Each member of our department has revamped courses in particular ways in response to student feedback about their courses. In addition, the department as a whole has discussed ways to help students understand the study of religion as an academic discipline within the liberal arts rather than an examination of personal faith issues.

2011-2012 will be a transitional year for the very small Religion Department. With the loss of Ron Miller as the senior member of the department and Christianity specialist, the department will hire adjuncts to teach courses during 2011-2012, and will launch a national search for a new Christianity scholar with expertise that will appeal to our students and connect the study of religion to other liberal arts disciplines.

**SOAN:** As we receive information from our students regarding their experience at Lake Forest College – especially within the Sociology and Anthropology Department, we have attempted to respond quickly. Students have suggested in their writings as well as in the quality of their analyses that they are capable of much more mature theoretical thinking than we had previously thought. This has resulted in a concerted effort among the department faculty to, “on the fly” increase theoretical components of our classes. The increased focus upon theoretical components has accompanied the department’s attempts to round out the curriculum to include fewer “boutique” courses that tend to proliferate based upon faculty research agendas/concentrations. Our current push has been to place more emphasis upon courses that provide a robust understanding of the canonical theoretical and topical foci within the disciplines. It is to this end that we have embarked upon a search for a Tenure Track hire within the more quantitative areas of sociology (demography, sampling/survey methodology). At present we are attempting a reshaping of the curriculum of the department. Repeated challenges to self-assess are assisting in providing a direction to these adjustments. So far, so good.

**Social Justice:** There is not an assessment plan for Social Justice. Since it's just a minor, there may not be the same contact with students or obvious ways to 'measure' success. As the program grows, I may not work directly with all students. We may need to talk about this. As with Philosophy, I'm not inclined to add more work for students just to satisfy what I still consider to be ridiculous demands by spooked external reviewers.

**Theater:** We are currently preparing for our departmental review in fall 2011, and are reviewing our current major requirements and course offerings with the intention of submitting to CPC a revision following the feedback we receive from the external reviewers. We believe that this revision toward more required rigorous core courses for the major and minor and fewer courses being offered will lead to stronger course enrollment and better trained graduating seniors.

**Urban Studies:** For the first time in 2011, we were able to offer an introduction to urban studies course. The course was well enrolled, and the interest in the minor has grown. We are able to offer the introductory course again through an innovation grant (we do not have a permanent allocation) in 2011-12 and hope to pursue a regular allocation for it. The spring class has a full enrollment, so we are seeing the demand. We also are clarifying the menu options of courses that count for urban studies, working with chairs of relevant departments to make sure the courses we list will continue to be taught. Julia Fiske is working with us to make sure she understands and can direct students toward appropriate urban studies internships. Finally, we intend to teach two course as an interdisciplinary concentration in urban studies in the "In the Loop" program in the fall of 2012. This will create a situation where our students are able to fulfill coursework and internship experience requirements while living in an urban setting.

**Women and Gender Studies:** missing

Additional comments/questions about assessing student learning in your department?  
How can the Assessment Subcommittee help your department/program in 2011-2012?

**Business, Economics, Finance:** As an incoming chair, I would welcome the opportunity to talk about department-level assessment in more detail.

**IREL:** I welcome the opportunity to speak with members of the Assessment Subcommittee about how the Department can further improve its assessment tools.

**Islamic World Studies:** Please keep us informed of creative assessment ideas proposed by other departments and interdisciplinary programs.

**Latin American Studies:** Working on revising student survey for next year.

**Legal Studies:** Working on exit survey and interview for next year.

**Modern Languages and Literature:** Our assessment of seniors will continue to be developed as our program develops. We will meet again this fall to follow up on the assessment discussion and implementation begun this spring, as well as discussion of on-line placement tools and future curricular development. The subcommittee members could perhaps provide some support for on-line placement tools if they have expertise in this area.

**Politics:** Going forward, the Department of Politics will rely on the following metrics to assess student learning: the ETS standardized exam in political science; a revised survey for graduating students *and* a voluntary face-to-face exit interview with the chair; data on the number of majors and minors, overall GPAs and GPAs the major, and the number of completed senior theses. The Department is also interested gathering data on recent graduates (i.e. two years and five years after graduation). I welcome the opportunity to speak with members of the Assessment Subcommittee about how the Department can further improve its assessment tools.

**Psychology:** We would love to track graduate school acceptance rates and keep better informed about what our graduates are doing, but we don't have the time or resources to keep on top of these things. Presumably, every department/program would find such information helpful. Thus, it would be nice if the Assessment Subcommittee could figure out a way to institutionalize this form of assessment (e.g., have the Alumni Office track such things and make the information accessible to departments and programs?).

**Religion:** Please keep us informed of creative assessment ideas proposed by other departments, particularly in the Humanities.

**Theater:** We are currently preparing for our departmental review in fall 2011,

**Urban Studies:** We need to be able to make a case for a permanent allocation for the urban studies intro course. We are seeing clear signs of interest in the student body, and we need to ensure the class is available regularly. If we can make clear the outcomes we expect and how this is an appropriate course for the college to offer, that would help.

**Return this in electronic format (a Word document) to:**

**Rick Mallette, Associate Dean of the Faculty via email attachment by June 15, 2011**

Assessing Student Outcomes modified and used with permission, Dr. Kelly Funk, Michigan State University; Dr. Sharron L. Ronco, Florida Atlantic University