

South Carolina State University Institutional Effectiveness Summary

Introduction

South Carolina State University's 2002 institutional effectiveness summary includes two components this year. The components are: General Education and Majors or Concentrations.

In addition to the two components, the institutional effectiveness summary report contains a statement concerning the institution's policies and procedures as it relates to its ability to provide a "technologically skilled workforce". This statement is delineated in the next two paragraphs.

The university has stated in its Mission statement that through instruction, research, and service activities, SCSU prepares highly skilled, competent, economically and socially aware graduates to meet life's challenges and demands that enable them to work and live productively in a dynamic, global society.

The University also includes in its 2001-2003 catalog, in its general education curriculum model, a statement that all graduate must be capable of participating in the dynamics of a rapidly evolving, highly technological, and global society. To achieve this goal, all students are required to take nine (9) hours in quantitative reasoning and technological understanding. Three hours are in computer technology.

In addition, all major programs of the university have outcome statements that indicate their graduates must be technologically prepared for the workforce.

The Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Reporting Process at South Carolina State University is a comprehensive process, which is coordinated by the Office of Institutional Research and involves extensive input from constituents across the entire campus.

The University's schedule for August 2003 reporting is delineated in Table 1.

Additional components may be added to this table because of the Commission on Higher Education Planning and Assessment Advisory Committee meeting to be held in Fall 2002. There is a proposal to develop a common reporting schedule for the Institutional Effectiveness Reporting Process.

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Table 1.
Individuals/Offices involved in Institutional Effectiveness
Assessment reporting and Reporting Cycle.

Component	Individual/Office	Reporting Cycle
Majors or Concentrations*	Chairs/Deans	August 2003

The University has established an Assessment Committee. This committee establishes and monitors policies to assess academic programs, select assessment instruments, and make recommendations for the improvement of programs in conjunction with the appropriate department chair/program director.

The assessment process for South Carolina State University's academic and administrative programs and services focuses on the development of annual program plans. These plans include the following: 1) a description of the programs' relationship to the University's mission statement; 2) identification of program outcomes and assessment criteria; and, 3) identification of how the assessment results will be used to improve the program and service.

1. General Education

The General Education Curriculum (GEC) at South Carolina State University (SCSU) is designed to ensure that the following outcomes are achieved.

1. All students will attain literacy---read with comprehension, write and think systematically and logically, and speak with clarity in a manner that is articulate and reflective of the educated.
2. Graduates will possess factual knowledge and conceptual understanding of the significance, impact and value of world art, history, culture, and humanities-based disciplines to enhance their general awareness of world issues and the complexities of modern culture.

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3. Graduates will possess quantitative knowledge of the life-related mathematics, sciences, economics, commerce and contemporary technologies.
4. Graduates will be fully functional, self-reliant contributors to the evolving global culture in which they all must participate.

Due to budget cuts, the University did not purchase a standardized examination as outlined in the plan of action of the last General Education report.

The Senior Exit Survey was used as the assessment tool for this reporting cycle.

Data will be collected on the fall 2002 entering freshmen class to determine the impact of the GEC Curriculum on their success in their respective majors. A team is developing a standardized test bank of questions to assess the GEC Curriculum using the Instructional Research Development Program, Socket.

During 2002-2003 academic year, the research study listed above will be full developed by the assessment committee, General Education Faculty, and Socket Team. The results will be shared in the next General Education report.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The Senior Exit Survey provides subjective data on desired outcomes of the general education curriculum. Graduating seniors complete this survey. This report will discuss the results of the 2001 survey. Five hundred and eighty-eight graduating seniors completed the survey. This is 81.2% of the students who graduated. The results of the survey were very positive. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents were female and 32% were male. Black students comprised 94% of the group; 4% were White, 1% Hispanic and 1% reported other.

The overall picture of the self-report data was positive on the key indicators: ability to write effectively, ability to speak effectively, critical thinking, scientific reasoning, mathematical and reasoning skills, problem solving, understanding computer technology, developing leadership skills, understanding of different beliefs, and working cooperatively in a group setting.

Ninety percent (90%) of the graduating seniors agreed that the statements indicating improvements in the specific area

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of communication skills (writing, speaking, and critical thinking) were due to the General Education Curriculum.

The Scientific Reasoning and Mathematical and Reasoning Skills indicators received the lowest level of satisfaction. Only 72% of the graduating seniors agreed that the General Education Curriculum improved their skills in these areas.

USE OF RESULTS/ACTION TAKEN

1. In academic year 2002-2003, the Assessment Committee, Director of Freshmen Programs, and the General Education Faculty began the development of standardized assessment instrument to measure the effectiveness of the revised General Education Curriculum using the Instructional Assessment Model, Socket.
2. The data from the Senior Exit Survey will be analyzed by schools and/or programs to determine strategies for addressing the reasoning skills weaknesses identified by the respondents.

1. MAJORS OR CONCENTRATIONS

In this reporting cycle, the university is reporting on the assessment of the following majors: Agribusiness, Political Science, History, Psychology and Sociology Programs.

The assessment tools used during this assessment cycle to assess majors are as follows: a senior comprehensive exit examination to assess the competency of graduating majors, the senior project to assess the knowledge and skills obtained from various courses and to evaluate research skills, feedback from the advisory committees, internships, cooperative learning experiences, senior exit surveys, student evaluations, program review data, and licensure examinations pass rates, if applicable.

AGRIBUSINESS

The Agribusiness program is designed to acquaint students with the food and fiber sector of the U.S. economy. Students are exposed to a variety of courses in marketing, management, agricultural policy and financial management. Assessment of students' program competencies is monitored by using the senior exit examination and internship data. This assessment data is also used to determine the effectiveness of instruction in agribusiness courses and to revise the curriculum.

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ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Results of the assessment revealed that the students are well prepared after completion of the program offerings. Over 90% of the students pass the examinations. The applied learning experiences (internships) have proven to be beneficial to students. Several course modifications have been made due to feedback from industry through the internship survey.

The program experienced a 98% placement rate of graduates in their field of study. The other 2% are continuing their study in graduate school.

The program's major weakness is low enrollment.

USE OF RESULTS/ACTION TAKEN

The annual assessment process of the Agribusiness program will continue. The following plan of action is being implemented to address the weakness identified in this assessment cycle.

1. The program faculty will work closely with the Office of Recruitment and Admissions to identify high school students who are interested in Agribusiness.
2. The Department of Agribusiness will collaborate with other colleges and universities in the state to attract transfer students and develop meaningful articulation agreements.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

In the area of Social Sciences, the following programs were assessed: the Teaching of History/Social Study, History and History Education, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology.

TEACHING OF HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES AND HISTORY

The Teaching of History/Social Studies and History programs primary function is to provide certified teachers for the state of South Carolina. In addition, graduates pursue jobs in government, business and industry.

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ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The assessment results revealed the following:

1. The History/Social Studies and History Education programs were combined in fall 1999 to meet the needs of the students.
2. Ninety-two percent of the students completing the senior exit survey rated the statements: How much your experience at SCSU has contributed to your growth and development in the area of: appreciation of cultural heritage and understanding of different beliefs as having a positive experience. This can be attributed to history and other related social sciences courses offered.
3. Fifty-seven percent (4 out of 7) of the social studies graduates passed the PRAXIS Specialty (NTE) examination.

The three major weaknesses of the program identified during the assessment cycle are as follows.

1. The poor pass rate of social studies majors on the PRAXIS Specialty (NTE) examination.
2. The lack of faculty to meet the student enrollment demand in general education courses.
3. The lack of resources to hire faculty.

USE OF RESULTS/PLAN OF ACTION

The annual assessment process of the Teaching of History/Social Studies and History programs will continue. The following plan of action is being implemented to address the weaknesses identified in this assessment cycle.

1. The program faculty will work closely with the School of Education faculty to identify major weaknesses on the praxis examination and identify strategies to assist students in passing the examination.
2. The Department Chair will develop and submit a plan to the university administration to identify quality teaching faculty and resources to support the faculty salary.
3. The program faculty will develop web based history courses which will allow more students an opportunity take courses via distance education. This will help to reduce the number of traditional classes needed.

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POLITICAL SCIENCE

This program provides training for graduates in three (3) concentrations: Professional, Pre-law, and Public Administration.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The assessment results revealed the following:

1. The curriculum content was revised and the integration of technology was included in all courses.
2. The PS 252, American Government, has been developed for web delivery. A test bank was designed using the Socket Program.
3. During the assessment cycle, 100% of graduating Seniors (n=12) received passing score on the exit examination.
4. There is no follow-up plan to track graduate placement.

USE OF RESULTS/ACTION TAKEN

The annual assessment process for the Political Science program will continue. The following plan of action is being implemented to address the weakness identified in this assessment cycle.

1. The program faculty will develop a graduate follow-up survey to track graduates.
2. The program faculty will work with the Career Planning and Placement Department to obtain information about graduates.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

Psychology and Sociology degree programs are designed to provide graduates employment opportunities in the field of social services, law enforcement, and anthropology.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The assessment results revealed the following:

1. Three new courses in human sexuality and medical sociology were added to improve the curriculum because of internship data.
2. The senior seminar was re-designed to become a capstone course for psychology majors.
3. A new program, PASS (Program in Applied Social Science) was developed for psychology and sociology majors. The

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- majors are placed in community agencies as volunteers to gain knowledge and skills to prepare them for jobs in their field of study.
4. SPSS software was added on all computers for students to participate more effectively in research related assignments.
 5. The Department chair attended a meeting of the Southeastern Society of Teaching of Psychology to determine if there is a need to seek accreditation for the program. The information gathered indicated there was not a need for accreditation but the program should develop "best practices" by using program assessment from students, graduates, and employers.
 6. The pass rate of the Sociology graduates on the exit examination was good but it was noted the graduates do not score well the written portion of the examination.
 7. The lack of sufficient placement data on program graduates.

USE OF RESULTS/PLAN OF ACTION

The annual assessment process the Psychology and Sociology programs will continue. The following plan of action is being implemented to address the weaknesses identified in this assessment cycle.

1. The program faculty will review the exit examination data, especially the written portion of the Sociology exit examination, to develop a plan of action to assist students to meet the written competencies requirement on the first attempt.
2. To obtain more graduate placement data, the faculty have developed a plan, which will be implemented Fall 2002 that will require program faculty to begin e-mailing freshmen majors. This will establish communication with program majors with the goal to continue the dialogue through graduation and beyond.
3. The program faculty will begin developing the best practices assessment process for the psychology and sociology programs.