

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): BA Undergraduate Majors

Department: American Studies

College/School: College of Arts and Sciences

Date: June 2018

Primary Assessment Contact: Heidi Ardizzone

1. Which program student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

LO 5: **Synthesize** American Studies knowledge with surrounding communities and public life, particularly in service of questions of social justice and solidarity.

2. What data/artifacts of student learning were collected for each assessed outcome? Were Madrid student artifacts included?

Internship Final Papers. Madrid not applicable

3. How did you analyze the assessment data? What was the process? Who was involved?

**NOTE: If you used rubrics as part of your analysis, please include them in an appendix.**

Emily Lutenski, Undergraduate Coordinator, developed a rubric. She and Ben Looker, Internship Supervisor, each assessed the available internship papers. See attached rubric.

4. What did you learn from the data? Summarize the major findings of your analysis for each assessed outcome.

**NOTE: If necessary, include any tables, charts, or graphs in an appendix.**

American Studies undergrad work for Learning Outcome 5 does a good job pushing students to reflect on and analyze the relationship between American Studies themes, emphases, and ideas and to consider how skills/knowledge from American Studies can and should be deployed in service to others and in community contexts. The average score was 4.5/5.0.

5. How did your analysis inform meaningful change? How did you *use the analyzed data to make or implement recommendations for change* in pedagogy, curriculum design, or your assessment plan?

This assessment was not performed until mid-June so we have not yet been able to use it to consider changes. Ben Looker suggests, however, that the department's longstanding instructions for the student final paper and student writing do not align entirely with the new learning outcome for LO-5, particularly in terms of explicitly asking the student to think and write about the community-engagement experience's relationship to "questions of power, justice, and solidarity," and in terms of the distinction between "working collaboratively across and within communities" as two distinct ways of thinking. In other words, our instructions for the student writing could stand to be fleshed out and tweaked so as to direct the undergraduate student more explicitly toward producing work that aligns with Learning Outcome 5. (Ideally, these instructions could be adapted to work emerging from a service-learning class, the other way of fulfilling Learning Outcome 5, as well—thus giving us a greater degree of consistency in the learning accomplished via the internship and service-learning-class routes.)

We have followed up on previous assessment considerations. First, we have now developed practices for collecting and saving undergraduate projects beyond the capstones. This assessment, for example, was extremely limited because the previous Internship Coordinator (who left SLU in 2016) had not retained the internship papers. Second, we have developed—in conversation with Gary Barker—a reorganization of our elective major classes in a way that will both shift the major requirements (pending approval in the Fall of the required college committees) and make the connections between specific courses and Learning Objectives more legible to us and to students. See attached proposal passed by the department faculty in April, 2018.

6. Did you follow up ("close the loop") on past assessment work? If so, what did you learn? (For example, has that curriculum change you made two years ago manifested in improved student learning today, as evidenced in your recent assessment data and analysis?)

We have not yet reassessed a specific learning outcome; we are on a 4 year cycle.

***IMPORTANT: Please submit any revised/updated assessment plans to the University Assessment Coordinator along with this report.***