SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): Master of Arts in Criminology & Criminal Justice (MACCJ)

Department: Criminology & Criminal Justice Programs, School of Social Work

College/School: College for Public Health & Social Justice

Date: July 12, 2018

Primary Assessment Contact: Noelle Fearn, PhD, CCJ Programs Director

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

> As identified in our AY 2017/2018 MACCJ Program Assessment Plan, we have assessed two MACCJ learning outcomes (LOs) during the 2017/2018 academic year. A bit differently than planned, however, our 2017/2018 MACCJ LOs assessed are LOs 1 and 4 (we had anticipated assessing LOs 1 and 2). L0 1: ***Students will assess relevant criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) literature/scholarly contributions***; L0 4: ***Students will articulate CCJ explanations/arguments to a disciplinary/professional audience in both written and oral formats***.
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> We also assessed students' perceptions of learning across all five MACCJ learning outcomes (LOs 1-5) through self-report via our MACCJ Exit Survey in May 2018. Five of our eight graduating MACCJ students (63%) completed the online survey.

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

> Individual student data was collected from our foundational theory course CCJ 5000 (Criminological Theory). Several writing assignments and both the midterm and final exams in the course were collected. The writing assignments and both exams required students to engage in assessment of CCJ literature and articulate CCJ explanations in both oral and written components.
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> A total of five graduating MACCJ students completed our MACCJ Exit Survey wherein they self-reported on a variety of Program-related areas, including our MACCJ program learning outcomes.
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> No Madrid student artifacts were included in our assessment activities.

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.

> The CCJ Programs Director reviewed each student paper and exam, along with each student's oral presentation and scored (using the appropriate rubrics, as outlined in our Assessment Plan) how well, overall, our MACCJ students met LOs 1 and 4. (As we undertake this first official year of program assessment for our new MACCJ Program, a number of challenges and limitations appear, which we plan to discuss and troubleshoot at our first CCJ Program meeting in the fall 2018 semester. A couple of issues identified already: 1) Most/all MACCJ students take our core CCJ

graduate courses during their first, not second, year in the program and, as such, we're really assessing their abilities/mastery during the first, not second/final, year....this is probably not great for overall program assessment; and 2) More CCJ faculty need to be involved in the process moving forward. This will likely not be as big of an issue AY 2018/2019 as two different CCJ faculty will teach two CCJ core classes in Spring 2019, right before this cohort graduates (which also will respond to the first issue identified above).

4. What did you learn from the data? <u>Summarize</u> the major findings of your analysis for each assessed outcome.
   NOTE: If necessary, include any tables, charts, or graphs in an appendix.

As noted above, caution must be taken with our assessment "results" as this was the first year of implementing our new assessment plan (which was not finished/approved until almost the end of the fall semester – leaving us a bit more than one semester to "see" the plan in action). Also, see detailed comments above regarding additional identified issues for MACCJ Program reflection for AY 2018/2019. That noted, below are the bulleted summary findings for both MACCJ LOs examined for this annual assessment report:

LO 1: Students will assess relevant criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) literature/scholarly contributions (Rubric 2)

Direct Measures

CCJ 5000 Exams (as indicator of theoretical comprehension and assessment)

- 40% (2/5) of MACCJ students performed at "graduate level" on their theory exams, as scored by MACCJ Rubric 1 (see MACCJ Assessment Plan for all rubrics used)

- 40% (2/5) of MACCJ students performed at level (3) (two levels above the benchmark) on their theory exams (MACCJ Rubric 1)

- One MACCJ student performed at benchmark level, did not exceed, on the theory exam (MACCJ Rubric 1)

- Overall, then, 80% of MACCJ students greatly exceeded the benchmark criteria for the ability to appropriately assess CCJ literature/scholarly contributions (only 1/5 simply met the benchmark but did not exceed it)

LO 4: Students will articulate CCJ explanations/arguments to a disciplinary/professional audience in both written and oral formats (Rubric 2)

Direct Measures

CCJ 5000 Written Theory Critiques and Corresponding Oral Presentations (as indicators of theoretical comprehension, assessment, and articulation)

- 40% (2/5) of MACCJ students performed at "graduate level" on their written and oral articulations of CCJ explanations/arguments (MACCJ Rubric 1)

- 40% (2/5) of MACCJ students performed at level (3) (two levels above the benchmark) on their written and oral articulations of CCJ explanations/arguments (MACCJ Rubric 1)

- One MACCJ student performed at benchmark level, did not exceed, on the written and oral articulations of CCJ explanations/arguments (MACCJ Rubric 1)

- Overall, then, 80% of MACCJ students greatly exceeded the benchmark criteria for the ability to articulate, in written and oral forms, CCJ explanations/arguments (only 1/5

simply met the benchmark but did not exceed it)

Overall Results from MACCJ Exit Survey

Indirect Measures (self-reported)

Five graduating MACCJ students self-reported their comfort level in their ability to do the following/being competent at each of the Programs five LOs:

- Assessing relevant CCJ literature/scholarly contributions (4 = very comfortable, 1 = somewhat comfortable)

- Applying CCJ theories, practices, policies, or research methodologies (4 = very comfortable, 1 = somewhat comfortable)

- Applying knowledge from CCJ to address problems in broader context (4 = very comfortable, 1 = somewhat comfortable)

- Articulating CCJ explanations/arguments to a disciplinary/professional audience in both written and oral formats (4 = very comfortable, 1 = somewhat comfortable)

- Identifying scholarly/professional integrity (ethics) in CCJ (3 = very comfortable, 2 = somewhat comfortable)

Respondents were very positive about and confident in their abilities to be competent in areas identified as critical in the CCJ discipline and by the MACCJ Program. "Very comfortable" was, by far, the most common response in all five areas (followed by "somewhat comfortable"); **none** of the respondents reported being anything less than "somewhat comfortable" in their abilities to meet/exceed our Program's learning outcomes (LOs).

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?

First, our CCJ Program faculty will discuss the AY 2017/2018 MACCJ Program Assessment Report at our first meeting in the fall. Discussion regarding recommendations for change/revision in any program area (or in our assessment activities), will take place, initially, at our first meeting (and continue for as long as we need to discuss). As part of our ongoing assessment work we will add "assessment tasks" as a standing item on our monthly meeting agenda and pay careful attention to soliciting feedback from faculty who apply the assessment rubrics to their courses/course activities. All MACCJ Program areas are appropriate foci for our assessment activities and we will make a concerted ongoing effort to discuss assessment, including our plan, its implementation, and the tools (e.g., assignments, rubrics, etc.) used to engage in this important endeavor. It is hoped that next academic year's assessment data, analyses, and reports will yield more useful data as we will be able to assess our MACCJ students in the spring (2019) semester right before they graduate, resulting in a more accurate picture of where our students are at the end of their MACCJ Program. we will do a much, much better collective job at ongoing discussion and use of the assessment rubrics we have included as part of our MACCJ Assessment Plan. Numerous emails have already gone out this summer and discussions planned/held to better support faculty/adjuncts in completing the rubrics for the 2018/2019 academic year, where and in our CCJ courses as appropriate. Finally, although not a terrible mark, that 40% of our respondents felt only "somewhat comfortable" regarding identifying scholarly/professional integrity (ethics) in CCJ, will be a topic for discussion and focus during AY 2018/2019 assessment activities.

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?)*

> Throughout AY 2017/2018 the CCJ faculty engaged in assessment-related discussions. Unfortunately, we have not yet had a chance to "close the loop" on any particular decision, as our revised plan was only submitted/approved in November of 2017 – so this is kind of our inaugural year of assessing our Program LOs, discussing our findings, and reporting out. We anticipate much more discussion during the next academic year as we reflect on what is working well (and, perhaps, not so well) with our assessment activities – especially regarding our use of rubrics and the degree to which consistent use of rubrics increases our confidence in our assessment results/supports the feedback solicited from students. Note: the 2017/2018 MACCJ Assessment Plan was updated to reflect a change in which learning objectives were assessed this first year.

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