



Saint Louis University Program Assessment Annual Reporting

It is recommended program assessment results be used to *celebrate achievements of student learning as well as to identify potential areas for future curriculum improvement.*

Please email this completed form as an attachment to thatcherk@slu.edu

- 1. Degree Program(s) included in this report:** Master of Science in Anatomy (Thesis, Project)
Department: Center for Anatomical Science and Education (CASE)
 - 2. School/Center/College:** School of Medicine
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Instructions: Please answer the following **five** questions to the best of your ability for each degree program offered within your department.

1. Summarize your **assessment activities** during the past year for each degree program and how this work relates to the established assessment plan (*e.g. what program outcomes were assessed, faculty discussions, new survey design, data collection, revised assessment plans or learning outcomes, etc.*). Please include how Madrid courses/program were involved.

The Center for Anatomical Science and Education (CASE) faculty members formed an assessment committee and developed a new assessment plan for the Master of Science (M.S.) in Anatomy (Thesis, Project) Programs in 2016. The final revision was approved by all CASE faculty members. This version of the assessment plan was also reviewed by Ms. Kathleen Thatcher, the University Assessment Coordinator.

We have used this new plan to assess our M.S. program. The CASE faculty members serve as the assessment committee. Assessment of student and program progress was discussed regularly at faculty meetings. Outcome measures in the M.S. program assessment plan included grade point average (g.p.a.) to ensure a basic level of competency in the anatomical sciences coursework. Course and student evaluations (e.g., course performance and student progression) were also used and discussed. Acceptable student progress in critical thinking and skills included the use of grading rubrics for course discussion participation, presentations, progress meetings with faculty, discussions with the M.S. faculty advisor, and annual student performance reviews with the faculty advisor. Graduate student exit surveys are also used as feedback to the program.

Madrid courses/programs were not included because the M.S. program has no interactions related to the Madrid campus.

2. Describe specific **assessment findings** related to the **learning outcomes** assessed for each degree program, including any pertinent context surrounding the findings. Please include the **learning outcomes themselves**. Do not include student-level data. Data included in this report should be in aggregate. Please include how Madrid courses/program were involved.

Our goals included assessing student performance to ensure competency in 1) the clinically oriented anatomical sciences and 2) the critical thinking and skills required for a thesis or project degree. The threshold for student performance in required coursework was a minimum cumulative B average (3.0 g.p.a.). The average g.p.a. for the 2016-2017 M.S. students was 3.53, which exceeds our targeted g.p.a. Acceptable student performance and progress was assessed at regular faculty meetings throughout the academic year. Students at risk for falling below the minimum g.p.a. requirement would be identified through discussions/updates from course directors and faculty advisors. No M.S. graduate student fell below the minimum g.p.a. for the 2016-2017 school year. Critical thinking and skills were assessed by a number of approaches; however, ultimately, competency in the final thesis research or capstone project is assessed by the completion of the thesis/project manuscript and oral defense of this scholarly work. By this standard, all of our M.S. students (100%; n=5 students) demonstrated competency and passed the final defense of the thesis research and capstone projects in the first attempt (i.e., no remediation was required). This demonstrates that the students are monitored carefully and advanced to candidacy at the appropriate time point. Further, 40% of our 2016-2017 M.S. students passed with distinction or great distinction, indicating that the committee members (scientists and educators within and outside of SLU) of these students concluded that the student was performing at higher than the minimal level of competency.

The progress and performance of students was also assessed through discussions during faculty meetings between faculty members who are also faculty advisors, course directors, and instructors of M.S. students. The M.S. curriculum and the coursework required direct interaction between students and faculty members through lecture, small group, laboratory, and office settings. Annual reviews on student progress and performance were also completed, discussed with students, submitted to and reviewed by the Director of CASE. Collectively, the faculty members were able to effectively communicate with students and other faculty to help ensure student success. Using this approach, students showing difficulties in coursework could be rapidly identified and meet with the course director or CASE Director to develop a corrective plan, if required.

Madrid courses/programs were not included because we have no interactions related to the Madrid campus.

**Please attach any tables, graphics, or charts to the end of this report.*

3. Describe how assessment **feedback** has been provided to students, faculty, and staff. (e.g. report for faculty, executive summary for the dean, web page for students, alumni newsletter, discussion with students in class or club event, etc.)

Most of the feedback to students occurs through discussions with faculty who are course directors. The Director of CASE also holds regular meetings with graduate students before and during the semesters. Students were asked for their feedback after the completion of some courses and surveyed following the completion of the M.S. program (exit survey). Students are also able to provide feedback to faculty advisors and Director of CASE through the annual review of student

progress and performance process. The information from these interactions was provided to the faculty members to help assess the program status and make any necessary changes.

4. In what ways have you **used assessment findings** to celebrate student achievements and/or to improve the curriculum this past year? (*e.g. prizes to students, hosting student parties, changes to curriculum, student projects, learning goals, assessment strategies, etc.*)

Each course director, faculty advisor, and the Director of CASE used the feedback from the students to make changes to the individual courses, thesis/project training, and the M.S. programs. Any accomplishments (honors, awards, abstracts, publications, etc.) by CASE students are highlighted on the CASE website. M.S. students were invited to participate in parties at the beginning and end of semesters to celebrate completion of the semester. Additionally, a CASE Hospitality Committee was created based to promote comradery, communication, and positive working relationships.

5. Describe any changes to your assessment plans, or any challenges or educational experiences with the **assessment process** this past year that you would like to share.

No changes at this time.

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