SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): General Studies

Department:

College/School: School for Professional Studies

Date: April 15, 2019

Primary Assessment Contact: Kyle Crews

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

The General Studies program was substantially revised during this assessment cycle. The changes were precipitated by our 2018 Academic Performance Review. We changed the curriculum, the student learning outcomes, and the "philosophy" that drives the program. Among other reasons for the revisions, we recognized several weaknesses in our learning outcomes and method of assessment.

First, the learning outcomes were essentially developed *after* the selection of courses from Arts and Sciences, which were specifically chosen to create a degree-completion option for students, and to meet state and federal certification requirements for students majoring in education at SPS. (We no longer offer the education program.) This is not to say, of course, that these learning outcomes had no relevance to the degree program, only that they were somewhat "reverse-engineered" for assessment purposes.

Second, we relied too heavily on courses from the SPS Core Curriculum. We used ENGL 2005, ENGL 4005, PHIL 2055, and THEO 1005 to measure four of the five learning outcomes. Of the seven courses we used for curriculum mapping, four were actually part of the Core Curriculum, which equated to almost 60% of our assessment work. It is not clear, then, whether the General Studies program was actually meeting the stated learning outcomes.

Third, we assessed the General Studies Capstone course (HUM 4960) for all five of the student learning outcomes. Theoretically, it was a good place to evaluate whether our graduating students could demonstrate the skills associated with each learning outcome. It made sense to use the course in our assessment plan, but we were placing an unnecessary "burden" on this course. And, by relying so much on this one course, we were failing to measure other courses in the program that may have played a more integral role in shaping student learning.

Finally, the capstone project in HUM 4960 simply did not demonstrate that students could apply an interdisciplinary approach to a social justice issue. The assignment did not address this topic at all.

Clearly, then, we were operating with a flawed assessment plan, and one that is now obsolete given the revisions we've made to the program. Therefore, we see little value in assessing an old program—and one that was dependent on a weak method of assessment.

Our new student learning outcomes were recently approved by the School for Professional Studies and the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee. Our goal for the next assessment cycle (AY 2019-2020) is to complete a new assessment report for the new iteration of General Studies, which will go into effect after July 2019. Our *goal* is to implement the new assessment plan in AY 2020-2021.

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

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.

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.

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?

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?)*

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