

L&S ASSESSMENT REPORT SURVEY 2012-2013

This survey may be completed online, by going to:
https://uwmadison.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_1KPP5NTbU2acZ6t

Introduction

Dear L&S chairs, directors, faculty, and academic program staff:

Annual assessment reports are due to the college by May 15, 2013.

By completing the survey that follows, you will be submitting your annual report on the assessment of student learning. These reports are needed so UW-Madison can comply with Regent and Federal regulations that require the university to systematically perform this work for all academic programs that lead to a credential (degree, major, and certificate). Your responses will be used to create the L&S Annual Report to the Provost on the Assessment of Student Learning. The college report to the Provost must contain a response for every L&S credential. As you know, this is a huge task - your help is essential.

The following links offer some background on Assessment of Student Learning, from the college assessment plan to some simple "how to" guides. (Some of the survey questions below also provide links to relevant resources.)

- L&S Assessment Plan: <https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/page.php?id=25259>
- L&S Department and Program Plans and Reports: <https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/page.php?id=23837>
- L&S Plan and Report content guidelines / templates: <https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/page.php?id=25242>
- Assessment Tips and Terms: <https://kb.wisc.edu/lis/page.php?id=25287>

This is the first time we are trying to gather this information by asking you to complete an online survey. Because reports are due May 15, 2013, the survey will be open during the Spring 2013 term. This survey has been designed to allow you to start, stop, and revise responses as long as you do so on the same computer where you started the survey, using the original link you were sent to begin the survey, and if you click "next" (which saves your information) before closing the survey. (If this gives you trouble, contact Elaine.) As an alternative to responding online, we will also make the survey available as an MS Word document that can be emailed to us.

If your program provides a formal report on assessment to a professional organization, accrediting agency, board of visitors, or other group, you may share that report as part of your response. Please contact Elaine Klein, the L&S Assistant Dean for Academic Planning (emklein@ls.wisc.edu) to discuss these options. (We will need responses for any programs that are not covered by these reports.)

Finally, we hope to share and use this information across the college, to encourage departments and programs to learn from each other, develop collaborations, and improve practices and learning. You may also notice that the information you provide here will be requested by other entities - the L&S Academic Planning Council, Curriculum Committee, and other groups in the college refer to assessment activities when discussing program reviews, requests for changes to courses and curricula, requests for departmental reconfiguration, calls for proposals for new projects, etc. Understanding how, and how well, our students are performing in our programs is essential to the work we do. The responses you provide will help us know if we're headed in the right direction.

Again, thank you for your response.

Gary Sandefur, Dean, College of Letters & Science
Elaine M. Klein, Assistant Dean for Academic Planning

Contact Information

Q2.1. If we have questions about the responses provided, it would be useful to be able to discuss them with you. Whom should we contact?

Thomas E. A. Dale, Chair and Professor of Art History

Q2.2. Address

Department of Art History, Conrad A. Elvehjem Building, 800 University Ave., Madison 53706

Q2.3. e-mail contact

tedale@wisc.edu

Q2.4. Telephone

608-263-5783

Program Information Validation

Q3.1. List all of the academic programs this response addresses. Remember to include undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as certificate programs. For your convenience, we provide here links to the lists of approved UW-Madison programs.

- Majors, options and degrees: http://registrar.wisc.edu/documents/85_Majors_Options_Degrees.pdf
- Certificates: http://registrar.wisc.edu/documents/85_Official_Certificates.pdf

Bachelor of Arts (L&S)

Bachelor of Science (L & S)

Master of Science (L & S)

Master of Arts-Art History (L & S)

Doctor of Philosophy (L & S)

Option: Architectural History

Option: Asian Option in Art History

(We also partly administer the Material Culture Studies Certificate but this is an interdisciplinary program that happens to be led by one of our faculty members)

Q3.2. Are the names and levels of the programs, as you understand them, consistent with the official lists?

- Yes
- No
- Academic program not listed: Option: Asian Option in Art History
- Academic program should not be listed

Q3.3. If an academic program name needs to be updated, you may need to request a change to make the working name consistent with the official name. This will require approval by the department/program, the L&S Academic Planning Council, and the University Academic Planning Council. If you think you would like to change an academic program name, please contact your associate dean and the Assistant Dean for Academic Planning, Elaine M. Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

- Information on changing program names: <https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=20052>

Should we let Elaine know you'll be contacting her about this?

- Yes**

Q3.4. If an academic program isn't listed, and if it should be formally recognized by the university, the department/program needs to seek approval through the College and University Academic Planning Councils. Please alert your department chair and associate dean that you wish to begin this process. If you have questions, contact the L&S Assistant Dean for Academic Planning, Elaine Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

- For Information on creating new academic programs: <https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=20049>

Should we let Elaine know you'll be contacting her about this?

- Yes, but the Asian Option is a pre-existing program that has been offered for about 10 years

Q3.5. If you have an academic program that should not be listed in these official documents (because the faculty have closed or suspended it), that action must be formally approved and implemented by the university. The department/program needs to seek approval through the L&S and University Academic Planning Councils.

Please alert your department chair and associate dean as soon as possible that you wish to begin this process. If you have questions, contact the L&S Assistant Dean for Academic Planning, Elaine Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

- For Information on suspending or discontinuing academic programs:
<https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=23316>

Should we let Elaine know you'll be contacting her about this?

- Yes
- No

Assessment Plan

Q4.1. Please review the assessment plan on file for your program(s).

- L&S Department and Program Assessment Plans: <https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=23837>

Is it current?

- **No**

Q4.2. If the plan on file is not current, and if you have a current plan, please send a copy to Elaine Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

If the plan on file is not current, and you need to update your plan, please provide a statement below explaining your plans to undertake that work. Your updated plan should be sent to the Dean (c/o Elaine Klein) by June 30, 2013. (Please contact Elaine if you need to discuss an alternative deadline.)

We will offer an updated plan by June 30th, one that is based on the department's recent revised vision and mission statement.

You may find the following documents useful as you undertake this work:

- L&S Plan and Report content guidelines / templates: <https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25242>
- Assessment Tips and Terms: <https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25287>
- L&S Department and Program Plans and Reports: <https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=23837>
- L&S Assessment Plan: <https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25259>

Q4.3. Do you have other programs on which you can provide an assessment report? (Please understand that we must provide some report on every academic program and credential we offer.)

- **Nope, I'm done here.**

Recent Assessment Activity

Q5.1. Assessment Purpose. Please describe the purpose of the assessment activity (e.g., to conduct a curricular or program review, to assess learning across a sequence of courses, to solve a problem with student performance, to honor MIU or other obligations, etc.)

Over the past three years, we have undertaken systematic curricular review in order to make our undergraduate and graduate curricula more responsive to students needs and to changes both in the field of art history more broadly and within our own department. Curricular reform was a strategic planning goal of our department identified in a department retreat at the beginning of my term as department chair. Specifically, we felt the need to better equip our students for the challenges of a global society in which visual/material objects play a central role, and also to better reflect the intellectual makeup of our department and discipline. Our new curriculum, to be implemented starting in 2013-14 academic year, shifts from a Eurocentric focus a global one, offering students multiple gateway courses that include the complete geographic and cultural range of the upper-level courses we teach, a range of disciplinary approaches (art history, archaeology, architectural history, material and visual culture studies) and also include a new global visual culture course that emphasizes global and transcultural themes. We have also revised our distribution requirements to give equal weight to all the fields we teach.

These curricular changes at the undergraduate level were based in part on two long-standing assessment tools: our capstone seminar (called a proseminar), which includes critical reading and discussion, oral presentations and significant research papers; and an exit survey for undergraduate majors. The latter used to be offered as a paper document, but this year we instituted a new online exit survey, using Survey Monkey, for majors and added a survey of new majors to help us measure both expectations and responses to recent changes in the major.

Another long-standing assessment tool that we have analyzed primarily in connection with tenure reviews and five-year post-tenure reviews is the individual course evaluations, which often include insights into learning outcomes and pedagogical techniques. From these surveys we have recognized the need to shift an emphasis from content-based visual memory testing in the large survey courses to more broadly based analytical skills acquired through critical reading in discussion sections and focused assignments.

At the graduate level, we have routinely reviewed student progress at a year-end faculty meeting, highlighting any problematic cases that need particular attention. Three years ago we introduced a Portfolio review in order to better assess student progress in the crucial first year of the Masters and of the Ph.D. program. The student is required to submit one copy of each research paper both in art history and other disciplines, and a research statement, updated annually to consider how all of the course-work relates to the student's educational goals and intellectual projects. The portfolio is evaluated at the end of each year by the student's principle advisor and a second faculty reader. This has been helpful in assessing student progress through their degree and addressing specific problems of individual students, but also has given us valuable information that led us to revise our requirements, raising the seminar requirement and providing special meets-with graduate course numbers for undergraduate lecture courses in which graduate students do extra research assignments at a graduate level.

Q5.2. Learning Outcomes or Goals Assessed. Referring to the list of student learning objectives/goals expressed in the program assessment plan, please identify the learning outcome(s) that were the focus of the assessment activity: what did you study about what you want students to know, value and/or do?

The most recent survey specifically addressed what we consider core skills of the discipline: visual literacy (skills in formal/visual analysis of art, architecture and visual/material culture); critical thinking and analytical skills; research skills; writing and oral communication skills. We also asked students for the thoughts on the advising process in the department, about how the program might be improved, and about future plans for graduate work or career-related employment.

Q5.3. Assessment Strategy. Please describe your most recent assessment project. What did you do to try to better understand student learning across this program, in the context of the learning goal discussed in your response above? Feel free to describe the tools, strategies, methods, and analysis used (e.g., graduating student surveys, standardized tests, grades on embedded questions on exams, alumni surveys, focus groups or interviews, evaluation of student work on papers, portfolios, capstone assignments, etc.)

SEE ABOVE.

Q5.4. Key Findings and Impact. Please summarize the key findings (evidence/results) and how the department or program plans to use this information (e.g., no curricular changes, program enhancements, program redesign, etc.). This may include to whom results were reported to effect change (if needed), whether the results suggested other areas of inquiry, plans for continued attention to assessment (including "tweaking" the assessment plan), and/or deadlines for achieving milestones related to the above activities.

Our key findings of recent assessment tools including the new survey of art history majors has suggested that students are generally confident that they are mastering core skill sets identified above. The surveys have also suggested a need to revise our undergraduate curriculum, however. Students have been critical recently of the Euro-centric or Western focus in our undergraduate requirements. They have also indicated a need for stronger background in methodology and theory. We have recently addressed this issue through the critical changes sketched above—a broader range of gateway courses beyond Europe, a more even distribution requirement in terms of global cultural geography and interaction, and new undergraduate methods course. It is also a central element of our strategic vision to pursue a global perspective in our teaching and research, and we will have successfully expanded our faculty range with recent hires in Chinese and Islamic art and visual culture (to begin next year), and the transfer of another faculty member from LCA in the field of Indian colonial and post-colonial architecture and urbanism. The impact of these changes will need to be assessed with updated exit surveys in the coming years.

Another important finding is increased interest in a curriculum focused on museum based learning and curatorial studies. With this in mind we have begun to create a curatorial studies curriculum, which draws on faculty expertise and our access to the Chazen Museum of Art and other collections on campus and in the region. We recently held a Curatorial Studies Think, sponsored by the Chipstone Foundation of Milwaukee, that generated many concrete ideas about innovations in curatorial practice and campus collaborations that will contribute to a distinctive curriculum at UW-Madison. We plan to submit a proposal for the new curriculum next academic year.

The Future

Q6.1. Please let us know what your next steps for assessing student learning will be.

Starting next academic year, in response to some feedback from our exit surveys, we will be reforming our advising structure to focus academic advising in the major in a single faculty position, Director of Undergraduate Studies, and we plan to have that faculty member oversee assessment of the undergraduate learning experience in collaboration with our Student services coordinator. Students have complained in the past about the system of multiple and shifting advisors from year to year. We have also beefed up career advising by joining the consortium of "historical humanities" in deploying a shared career advisor and have orchestrated specific events for undergraduates to address career issues.

We also plan to re-introduce alumni surveys to assess the longer-term success of our undergraduate majors and graduate students, not only in traditional academic and museum-based professions, but also in applying their skill sets to other careers. We have already compiled quite a lot of information based on reports from alumni to our annual newsletter, but a more formal survey will better help us assess the concrete value of our degree programs.

Thank you!

Please email this document to emklein@ls.wisc.edu.

If you prefer, hard copies may be sent to Elaine Klein, Rm 307D South Hall

We'll be in touch if we have any additional questions.