

**Departmental and Program Assessment  
Annual Assessment Plan Basic Update**

Academic Year: 2013-2014

Academic Unit: Classics

Chair: Chris Campolo & Rebecca Resinski

**Student Assessment Plan (SAP) – Basic Check-list**

1. Have any changes been made to your program's student assessment plan or student learning goals?  
no
2. Are student learning goals available to students on the web on the departmental/programmatic page(s)? If not, then this will be considered as an action plan for the coming year.  
yes
3. Are student learning goals, appropriate for each course, included in the course syllabi in your department or program? If not, then this will be considered as an action plan for the coming year.  
yes

**Student Assessment Plan Development** - Departments and programs who have a complete and current SAP should consider the next step in SAP development.

1. As a next step in SAP development, departments/programs are encouraged begin working on an assessment audit to determine how student learning goals fit across the courses in the major. Sometimes the term “scaffolding” is used to describe this process. This could be as complicated as a full grid of student learning goals, or a single learning goal, across the courses in the major. (This has not been required of departments, but it is a recommended next step when the SAP is up to date.) Has your program already done this?

yes; it is included in the current Classics SAP

**Yearly Assessment Report** – each department or program is expected to have assessment discussions for at least two hours each academic year. If necessary, help is available from David Sutherland, just call.

1. What was your planned action item identified in your last report?

On last year’s assessment form we listed three action items for this year: the implementation of check-in sessions for seniors studying for their comprehensive exam; assessment of learning goals #5 and #6 on the Classics SAP; consideration of some of Professor Williamson’s courses in Religious Studies for possible inclusion in the Classics program. In fall 2013 the program decided not to pursue including any of the Religious Studies courses in the Classics program.

2. Briefly summarize the topics discussed in your annual assessment meeting.

In our spring 2014 assessment meeting we discussed the first two action items listed above. Professors Campolo and Rauh, who coordinated the comprehensive this year, reported on their experience with the check-ins, and Professors Campolo, Rauh, Behymer, and Resinski each reported on their recent courses which incorporated either learning goal #5 or #6. Each professor completed an assessment rubric form for each course in advance of the meeting and used the data and reflections recorded on the form as springboards for discussion.

3. What was the conclusion of your assessment discussion and how did the collected assessment data inform your conclusion? Specifically describe any curricular or programmatic changes that have been made that were based, at least in part, on the data in your SAP.

Faculty found the implementation of check-ins for seniors studying for their comprehensive exam to be a positive addition to the program. Students started studying for the exam earlier and more consistently. Exam grades were higher this year than last year (though this may also be partly due to the composition of the cohorts involved). We will continue with the check-ins next year.

In regard to learning goal #6, “to examine the continuing influence of the Classical world beyond antiquity”:

- We discussed both intentional and ad hoc ways in which this learning goal is addressed in a variety of our courses.
- Both indirect and direct assessment measures showed that students successfully and consistently fulfill (and appreciate) this learning goal when it is built into courses, and much of our conversation on this topic involved consideration of how this goal can be more intentionally included in our courses. For instance:

- Professor Campolo will think about devising an assignment that specifically addresses this goal for Classics/Philosophy 285.
- Professor Rauh may expand into a unit the formal consideration of Classical influence in his topics course on tyranny, liberty, and citizenship.
- Professor Resinski will now include at least two assignments related to Classical reception (rather than one) in her Classics 200 course so that students can see more than one way in which Classical myth continues to be used and relevant.
- If Professor Behymer teaches Classics 200 again, she would make the parts of the Classical reception project into separate but interlocking assignments to allow students to build on their work throughout the semester.

In regard to learning goal #5, “to investigate in depth specific topics related to the Classical world or Classical reception”:

- Our topics courses in Classics focus on this learning goal squarely, and we try to offer one of these courses every year. (But that is not possible in years when one of us is teaching TEC, as will be the case in 2014-2015).
- The direct and indirect assessment data gathered and recorded on our individual assessment rubric forms indicate that recent offerings have been very successful in helping students achieve this goal. Students find the topic-specific approach engaging, enriching, and satisfying.
- We discussed the various kinds of activities used in these courses to reach and assess this goal, and we especially pooled ideas about kinds of assignments which would help students to synthesize course material and generate thoughts on their own *before* class conversation. Such activities will ultimately enable students to go farther and deeper in their investigations.

4. Define one new action item for your assessment discussions next year.

We plan to focus on assessing and discussing learning goal #8 on the Classics SAP next year: “to express interpretive and analytic ideas in oral and written forms.”