

2014-15 Assessment Report

1. Assessment Activities and Measures

2013-14 student-evaluations identified low academic rigor and poor student engagement as problematic for some of our APST department. This concern was discussed with all full-time faculty at our first fall meeting. Suggested strategies to improve in this area included use of technology, strong adherence to the course descriptions and assessment plan, quality grade distribution and introduction of best-practice teaching methodologies.

Faculty identified dissatisfaction with student research abilities, writing samples and oral communication skills. Strategies to improve in this area included use of rubrics, frequent writing assignments associated with vigilant corrections *and* allowing for mastery learning. Additional suggestions included peer-reviews in oral presentations and dedicated lectures to identify best-practice in oral presentations. Department priorities included: improvement in academic rigor, student research skills as well as written and oral communication skills.

Our assessment plan requires faculty provide the chair with artifacts of student work to illustrate attainment of department goals. Grade distribution was studied and students were encouraged to participate in the university-wide student assessments but participation was again low this year.

Faculty Hite and Min were up for formal review and both evaluations indicate a need for increase in scholarly activity.

2. Outcome of the assessment activities.

- a. Student-evaluations are much improved this year in both satisfactory comments and mean scores.
- b. Submitted artifacts were of high-quality and showed a significant increase over the previous AY. Some examples included oral presentations and student writing samples.
- c. Grade distribution is still much skewed in core courses. Comparisons to non-core course grades continue to show a large separation.
- d. Min and Hite have developed individual research plans and have embarked on a total of three research projects.

3. Changes or Planning for Changes as a Result of Assessment

- a. The department will continue to improve teaching and the chair has made recommendations for professional development for some faculty. APST will continue to assess and improve upon student learning outcomes based on student and peer assessments. Previously mentioned strategies will continue to be implemented.
- b. Grade distribution will continue to be looked at and will be emphasized as a measure for reappointment and tenure.
- c. Scholarly activity will continue to be emphasized in reviews and monitored by the chair and dean.