

Knox College Departmental and Program Assessment Planning Template
2012-2013 Academic Year

Submit to Leah Adams-Curtis (lcurtis@knox.edu) by Monday, October 22, 2012.

Department/Program: Biochemistry

Name: Janet Kirkley

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

- 1) describe how the physicochemical nature of the macromolecules contributes to their function.
- 2) demonstrate comprehension of the scientific method and skill in research by being able to:
 - set an experimental objective
 - understand how the technique used works
 - understand why that technique is appropriate to that objective
 - use the technique to acquire data
 - analyze and present the data
 - come to a reasonable conclusion supported by the data
 - communicate that conclusion.
- 3) apply principles learned in prerequisite courses to a specific discipline in Biochemistry or a related field.
 - 1.
 - 2.

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

Assessment information was shared by e-mail. The committee discussed the current assessment plan and decided to incorporate early and later reviews of student learning in the core courses and to add the Biochemistry core courses to the survey currently done for Biochemistry electives.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

Biology will use what it has learned in the 2011-2012 academic year to continue to address changes in the Biology 120 curriculum.

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities ***for 2012-13.***

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Review laboratory notebooks and reports early and later in term.	2	Yes

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Review term and final examinations in three core courses.	1	Yes
Survey students in Biochemistry core and elective courses to determine how well prerequisite courses prepare them for later courses.	3	Yes

Additional information or comments:

Please provide any additional information or comments with regard to departmental/program assessment activities, as appropriate.

Please attach a copy of any assessment instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, etc.). Please indicate if these are final versions or drafts.

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Department/Program: Computer Science

Name: David Bunde

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

1. be able to analyze problems from other disciplines and extract the computational elements of those problems.
2. be able to design efficient solutions to computational problems.
3. be able to develop new algorithms to solve computational problems, assess the complexity of the algorithm, and compare the algorithm to others in order to decide the best algorithm to use (from a set of algorithms) to solve the problem.
4. be able to explain their design using terminology of the field.
5. be able to implement a design solution in a variety of programming languages.
6. understand the inner workings of computers and be able to use that understanding to impact their solutions of computational problems. The goal of the impact is to make the solutions more efficient.

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

We're a small department (3 FTE) and we meet frequently. Our alumni survey for last year is being finalized. We have not made any changes.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

No changes planned this year.

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities ***for 2012-13***.

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Finalize, administer, and examine results of alumni exit survey.	1-6	No
Survey 141 students and graduating majors to see their pre-Knox background in the field. Will continue this yearly (eventually just incoming students).	Accessibility of our program. We have observed that students with prior programming	Yes

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Department/Program: Economics

Name: Jonathan Powers

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

1. Select an appropriate economic model as a framework for analyzing a problem or explaining a current event.
2. Describe and discuss the strengths and limitations of applying a particular economic model in analyzing a problem or explaining a current event.
3. Interpret statistical techniques used in economic analysis and effectively communicate statistical results.

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities ***for 2012-13.***

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Assess students' application of an economic model, concept or idea to analyze an article in the Economist magazine in Econ 399 (Senior Seminar). In both sections of Econ 399 students are required to read the Economist magazine weekly. Students must hand in a one to two page paper in which they apply some economic model, concept or idea to an article in the magazine.	1, 2 (though not an explicit part of the assignment)	Yes
<i>If you have more than one assessment activity planned, please add here. Otherwise, please leave the remaining rows blank.</i>	Click here to enter text.	Choose yes or no
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Choose yes or no

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	experience typically do well early in the program and want to ensure that other students can still succeed in our program.	
Give “design problems” asking students to select appropriate data structures to students in 142 and our capstone courses.	Primarily 2, 3, and 4. Possibly also slightly 1.	Yes

Additional information or comments:

We attach a sample of design problems of the type we intend to use for the last assessment activity. These have been used in 142 and we expect to generate others.

Please attach a copy of any assessment instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, etc.). Please indicate if these are final versions or drafts.

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Submit to Leah Adams-Curtis (lcurtis@knox.edu) by Monday, October 22, 2012.

Department/Program: Journalism Program

Name: David Amor

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

1. ***Reporting and Information-Gathering:*** by graduation, Journalism minors will be able to identify socially significant issues, formulate questions, and gather reliable information from a variety of sources and perspectives;
2. ***Written and Visual Communication:*** they will be able to synthesize information into timely, accurate and compelling reports of progressively increasing levels of complexity and sophistication, in textual and/or visual media;
3. ***Ethics of Journalism:*** they will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the ethical foundations of journalistic practice, both to truth as a governing ideal and to the wellbeing of the community of which the journalist is a part;
4. ***Institutional & Social Contexts of Journalism:*** they will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the economic, political and cultural institutions and systems within which journalism as a profession is situated and which shape journalistic practice.

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

The Journalism Program conducted a comprehensive program review, including analysis of internal data, a survey of Journalism Program alumni of the past ten years, a visit and report by three outside evaluators, departmental review of all these materials and a report to the Dean of the College recommending a variety of changes of the program, staffing, changes to the minor requirements, and recommendations for changes in broader college policies regarding minors. This report, accepted by the Dean, was a collaborative product of the entire program faculty. In addition, all declared Journalism minors in 2011-12 were assessed at the level of individual course instructors for each Journalism course in which they were enrolled during that academic year, using a rubric evaluating the degree to which they demonstrated competence in terms of the Program's four Learning Goals. As a result of all these assessment activities, we requested the Curriculum Committee to authorize changes to the structure of the minor, subsequently approved, and we requested the authorization of a search for an entry-level tenure-track position in Journalism, also approved.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

See above for changes already implemented as a result of assessment activities in 2011-

12. We also have worked with an adjunct professor to rename and revise a course on

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Digital News to address issues raised in our program review. We also un-cross-listed two creative nonfiction courses offered by the English Department (though still counting them toward the minor) to address a recommendation from the program review.

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities *for 2012-13*.

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Course-level assessment of all Journalism minors each term using existing rubric	All four learning goals	No
Exit survey of graduating Journalism minors, using instrument adapted from one used to survey alumni as part of the program review.	All four learning goals, in addition to other aspects of the Program	Yes
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Choose yes or no

Additional information or comments:

Attached is a copy of the rubric used for program assessment of the four learning goals (final) and a copy of the alumni survey which will be the basis for our senior exit survey. Note: no editing has yet been done to repurpose this instrument.

Please attach a copy of any assessment instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, etc.). Please indicate if these are final versions or drafts.

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Department/Program: Mathematics

Name: Andrew Leahy

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

1. Reason logically and demonstrate complex problem solving skills
2. Demonstrate competency in the core of the discipline
3. Communicate effectively in the language of the discipline
4. Demonstrate a knowledge of how to use technology to support investigation

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

The department has met weekly since the beginning of the year, and last year's annual assessment report was circulated among the department and kept in a shared network folder. We have discussed the results of our assessment quizzes (see below). They indicate to us that students are not retaining information from previous courses, and we are working on ways to improve this.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

The assessment quizzes have been implemented in courses up and down the curriculum. As noted above, the results of these quizzes suggest to us that students are not successfully retaining information from class to class. To address this, we are trying to move to a practice where all midterm exams (and finals) are cumulative. We are also trying to standardize on practices for administering these quizzes in each class so that results are consistent.

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities ***for 2012-13***.

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Implementation and discussion of assessment quizzes for Math 151, 152, 205, 210, and 300.	2	No
Discussion of results of oral presentation rubric	3	No
Development of learning goals for Math 205	2	Yes

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Additional information or comments:

We also met to discuss the content of Math 140-141 (Calculus for Life and Social Sciences) with the instructor of Econ 301 (Intermediate Microeconomics). We are in the process of developing learning goals for the course, which is primarily a service course for the economics department.

We are also planning to implement for the first time our technology rubric by assessing individual student assignments in core courses. We also intend to have a discussion of our writing rubric for students in Math 300 so that we can evaluate the results and develop a shared understanding of the rubric among department members.

Please attach a copy of any assessment instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, etc.). Please indicate if these are final versions or drafts.

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Department/Program: Music

Name: Jeremy Day-O'Connell

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

1. All music majors will be able to precisely describe detail and form in music (whether presented in sound or score) through words and analytical symbols, and to apply such analytical insights to unfamiliar pieces and repertoires.
2. All music majors will be able to demonstrate basic practical proficiency on some instrument.
3. All music majors will have specialized in at least one domain of study--performance, musicology/theory, and/or composition--and will have advanced skills relevant to that specialty. In particular:
 - a. Performance students (whether instrumental, vocal, or conducting) will be able to perform artistically at an advanced level.
 - b. Musicology and theory students will be able to construct and evaluate a musicological or analytical argument critically and sensitively.
 - c. Composition students will be able to compose original pieces that draw upon existing musical vocabulary as well as articulate their own artistic voice.

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

Assessment discussions involving the entire Music faculty were conducted: 1) in a dedicated Department meeting on May 23, 2012; 2) in a self-study retreat on August 20, 2012.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

- Nikki Malley, on Music 102: "When I teach Music 102 next year, I will return to the daily graded assignments to help insure that students are remaining current with course readings and materials." She will also add a library day and a series of assignments requiring students to use research resources. Finally, she will also integrate basic

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notation and score-reading into the course, assessed in exams.

- Jeremy Day-O'Connell, on Music 145-L, 245-L, 246-L: "I have identified students from 245-L who need *daily* help from me in their learning and practicing of musicianship assignments in 246-L. I have also prepared a "battle plan" document to explicitly model strategies for progressive daily practice." He will also schedule a transcription exercise, requiring students to translate open score (with transposing instruments) into piano notation.

- Bruce Polay, on Music 363: "I plan to require less general listening and more in-depth aural/written analysis relating to formal structures."

- Bruce Polay, on Music 345: "I plan to modify the content and ordering of repertoire in order to better pace the sequencing of compositional techniques."

- Bruce Polay, on Music 257: "I will implement more analysis projects."

- Sarah Day-O'Connell is preparing documents related to expectations in Music 399. Also, "Ideally the course learning goals will be written to incorporate more of the grading rubric. I'll work on this for next time."

- Laura Lane, on Music 361: "I am going to use more full scores at the end of the course, to help the students learn to read full scores."

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Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities *for 2012-13*.

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Student and alumni surveys will be administered and analyzed.	1, 2, 3	Yes
The Department is in continued conversations with the Dean, with respect to our Self-Study Report (Spring, 2011) and an External Reviewers' Report (Summer, 2011). We are developing actionable points.	1, 2, 3	Yes
We have received provisional and tentative approval from the Dean to conduct a professional space study of our facilities. We intend to conduct one this academic year.	1, 2, 3	Yes
Ashlee Mack is preparing explicit guidelines for the completion of the Piano Proficiency requirement. The Department is in discussions with her about this.	2	Yes

Additional information or comments:

Please provide any additional information or comments with regard to departmental/program assessment activities, as appropriate.

Please attach a copy of any assessment instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, etc.). Please indicate if these are final versions or drafts.

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Department/Program: Psychology

Name: Frank McAndrew

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

1. Apply the scientific method to studying the mind, the brain, and behavior
2. Successfully search the scientific psychological literature to find existing work that can inform the specific claims students are making
3. Understand the basic theoretical approaches and classic empirical findings of psychology
4. Effectively communicate with clear, grammatically-correct writing that conforms to APA style.
5. Make effective oral presentations that are clear, well-organized, and interesting
6. Select and conduct appropriate statistical tests in order to empirically test a claim
7. Empathically communicate a reasonably accurate understanding of another person's experience (tentative goal)

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

We had several department meetings. A small committee (Kasser & McAndrew) developed the goals and instruments for approval by the department.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities ***for 2012-13.***

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Writing will be assessed by way of an online evaluation of the final draft of senior research papers. An assessment of the "hassles" needed to get the paper in final shape will also be made.	4	Yes
<i>If you have more than one assessment activity planned, please add here. Otherwise, please leave the remaining rows blank.</i>	Click here to enter text.	Choose yes or no
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Choose yes or no

Submit to Leah Adams-Curtis (lcurtis@knox.edu) by Monday, October 22, 2012.

Department/Program: Religious Studies Program

Name: James Thrall and Penny Gold

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

Students who have completed the religious studies minor should be able to:

- 1. Analyze the role of religion in human societies of both ancient and modern worlds**
- 2. Trace the historical development of religious institutions, texts, practices, and beliefs**
- 3. Explain key similarities and differences in a variety of religious traditions**
- 4. Engage respectfully and critically with the religious backgrounds and assumptions of others as well as their own**
- 5. Apply key terms and concepts common to the academic study of religion**

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

We have taken several steps to implement assessment of student learning in Religious Studies:

1. In January 2012, we did a **survey of 16 current students** who had declared a minor in Religious Studies (including one student in the process of formulating a self-designed major in the field and one post-bac who had minored). Most programs launching a self-study do a survey of alumni, but there have been so few in RELS, and the program is so different now that we have a full-time tenure-track position, that we thought it made more sense to survey current students. The survey questions centered on the learning goals the faculty had identified; we wanted to know if students perceived these goals as being accomplished. Our thought was that if students reported weakness in one or two areas more than others, that would be an indication as to where we might begin our assessment efforts. The results, however, did not end up with a highly differentiated result on the five learning goals. On a scale of 1 to 6, all five goals scored 5.0 or above. We also asked students about goals met in individual courses, but the small number of students reporting for each class (except for 113, which 12 of them had taken), render these numbers not meaningful. We now realize this question would be better addressed through assessment within individual courses. We also asked three open-ended questions, two about learning goals, and one asking for any suggestions. The comments on learning goals were in accord with the quantitative data: general satisfaction with the learning goals as formulated. Specific suggestions for the program fell into a few areas:
 - a. *New courses of interest* (something we prompted for): Subjects of interest were (with a semi-colon separating individual student responses) rise of secularism, religion and science; a version of "Great American Debates" (a history department course) with a topic on religion, the Protestant Reformation, cults in the U.S., the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Scientology; methodologies in the academic study of religion; Norse religion and myth. [Several of these are

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courses that may well be offered in the near future: Duane Oldfield (Political Science) is interested in the history of secularism, Judy Thorn (Biology) is developing a course on "Life" from the perspectives of both religion and science, Catherine Denial (History) is developing a version of "Great American Debates" on the place of Native American religion in the U.S., and Jim Thrall is considering a methodologies course.]

- b. Other comments were made by one student each:
 - i. concern about unevenness in how the religious belief of professor and students is handled in the classroom;
 - ii. the need for more professors in RELS
 - iii. the benefit of doing field trips

Although only mentioned by one student each, concerns ii and iii are close to self-evident, and the first concern is one that it would be useful for us to discuss as a group. All faculty teaching RELS courses are undoubtedly aware of the issue, but we have not ever discussed it as a group; we could learn much from each other by doing so.

2. **Curriculum Map:** We assembled information for a curriculum map for a faculty retreat in June 2012, to allow faculty to do their own rating of how much individual courses fulfilled any of the five goals. Results from the faculty rating indicated that the program currently has the fewest courses that fulfill the fifth learning goal: "Apply key terms and concepts common to the academic study of religion." We therefore decided to focus our next assessment effort on that goal.
3. **Discussion of learning goal #5:** We held a half-day workshop in early September, 2012 to take the first step of ourselves discussing key terms and concepts in the academic study of religion, and their role in the courses we teach. We worked from a common reading (the essay on "Belief" in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*) and from preparation of various terms/concepts done by each of us and presented to the group. Terms/concepts focused on in our discussion included: deity, sacred/profane, land-based religion, secular, identity. Our discussion clarified that some terms are particular to specific courses (e.g., "land-based religion" in a course on Native American religion), while others are more likely to be found in many of the courses we teach (e.g., sacred/profane). We are not inclined to try to create a short list of "must apply" concepts; rather, we will encourage instructors to be intentional about the key terms/concepts that are central to individual courses, and that we include opportunities for students to demonstrate that they can apply those terms/concepts.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

We do not plan to implement changes in instruction or curriculum for the 2012-13 academic year as a result of the 2011-12 assessment. We do, however, plan to respond at least in part in future academic years to suggestions the surveyed students made for new topics for courses. Subjects of

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interest were (with a semi-colon separating individual student responses): rise of secularism, religion and science; a version of "Great American Debates" (a history department course) with a topic on religion, the Protestant Reformation, cults in the U.S., the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Scientology; methodologies in the academic study of religion; Norse religion and myth.

Several of these topics may well be offered in the near future. Duane Oldfield (Political Science) is interested in the history of secularism. Judy Thorn (Biology) is developing a course on "Life" from the perspectives of both religion and science that should be offered in 2013-14. Catherine Denial (History) is developing a version of "Great American Debates" on the place of Native American religion in the U.S. James Thrall is in the process of developing a methodologies course.

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities *for 2012-13*.

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
To begin the process of assessment within individual courses, James Thrall will assess student master of key terms/concepts (Goal #5) in his Fall 2012 RELS 101 course, using the results of multiple choice and true/false questions on the course's two primary exams. He will share the instrument(s) and the results of the assessment with other faculty, and we will meet in January 2013 to discuss his experience assessing goal #5. The same or amended instrument(s) will be used in the winter offering of 113 by Fatkin, and other professors teaching in winter or spring will also do assessment in their courses. (We will aim for assessment in at least two other courses in 2012/13.) At the end of spring term, we will meet to discuss the results of this year's assessment and what we've learned about students' ability to apply key terms/concepts.	5. Apply key terms and concepts common to the academic study of religion	Yes
<i>If you have more than one assessment activity planned, please add here. Otherwise, please leave the remaining rows blank.</i>	Click here to enter text.	Choose yes or no
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Choose yes or no

Additional information or comments:

The cross-listed nature of most of our RELS courses is a special challenge. For example, last year Gold implemented assessment in 113, but it was assessment of the course as a 100-level *history* course, rather than as a religious studies course, with the assessment focused on students'

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ability to analyze primary sources from a historical perspective. This goal is not incompatible with the religious studies nature of the course, and more than one assessment could be done, but it seems enough to ask of a faculty member to assess for one program at a time, rather than two.

Please attach a copy of any assessment instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, etc.). Please indicate if these are final versions or drafts.

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Department/Program: Theatre

Name: Neil Blackadder

Please list your department/program's Goals for Learning.

1. Students will recognize, identify, and analyze genre, structure, and the creation of meaning in playscripts.
2. Students will demonstrate understanding of the processes whereby a playscript is manifested as live storytelling--encompassing non-verbal as well as verbal language--through acting technique, design, dramaturgy and directing.
3. Students will recognize and identify historically significant authors and movements throughout global theatre history, and the cultural and social realities that governed the origins and evolution of performance.
4. Students will articulate literacy in the verbal and visual vocabulary of theatrical production, including terms and concepts fundamental to acting, design, script analysis, directing, playwriting, and stage mechanics.
5. Students will identify and analyze the social and political implications and effects of performance.

Please describe how your 2011-12 assessment information was shared within the department/program, and the decision-making process for determining any changes to be made. *If your department/program does not plan any changes, please discuss how you arrived at that decision.*

Results from production survey were discussed in department meetings; results from senior survey have been discussed by chair with Leah Adams-Curtis, and will be discussed by the dept. faculty once two members return from fall-term leaves.

Please describe any changes in instruction or curriculum that you are implementing this year as a result of *your 2011-12 assessment*.

No specific changes planned, partly because faculty leaves have meant that after Fall '11 we won't all be on campus again until Winter '13. Also, in Winter '13 we are producing Repertory Term (which happens every three years) which is very demanding on our time and resources.

Please describe your planned assessment procedures/activities ***for 2012-13.***

Assessment procedure/activities/tools	Goal(s) assessed	New assessment?
Continuing to align learning goals in each course to departmental goals, and to periodically review how effectively the assignments in our courses reflect the stated	1,2,3,4,5	No

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learning goals.		
Continue to collect and consider data from survey of students involved in production.	2,4	No
Discuss results of senior survey carried out in Spring '12, and administer a revised version in Spring '13.	1,2,3,4,5	No

Additional information or comments:

I am not attaching any assessment instruments, since you have the versions we've used previously; we will provide any new versions that result from revisions.

Please attach a copy of any assessment instruments (e.g. rubrics, surveys, etc.). Please indicate if these are final versions or drafts.