

Assessment Plan for the Knox Graduation Requirements

Knox College has developed and, for several years now, has implemented formal program review for all academic departments and programs. We have also implemented a process by which departments and programs engage in assessment of at least one of their learning goals annually. Assessment of all Knox graduation requirements is the remaining piece, and we have now developed a complete program for this undertaking, as outlined below. The intention of this document is to provide a guide or blueprint to begin the assessment of graduation requirements. Inevitably, as we begin these assessments, we will find that the proposed processes here are in need of revision.

1. **Foundations: Arts, History and Social Sciences, Humanities, and Mathematics and Natural Sciences**

Faculty who teach in each of the foundation areas have met to develop learning goals for the foundations. The learning goals will be presented to the entire faculty during the current academic year.

- A. The faculty is currently in the process of implementing and assessing a new form of First-year Preceptorial. They will likely make a formal decision about the ongoing form of this course by spring of 2013. Whatever decision is reached, the writing required of its students will be assessed annually, and the course itself will be evaluated in a focused way each time it is offered. At a minimum, the evaluation will be an indirect assessment of at least one of the learning goals for the course.
- B. The Director of Academic Assessment will annually review all departmental/program assessments and determine which of the Knox Goals for Learning, including those linked to foundations and key competencies, were assessed through the departmental/program assessments during that period. The results of this evaluation will be reported to the faculty and to the Dean of the College.
- C. The college will develop a regular cycle of review for the key competencies and foundations. Each requirement area will be reviewed at least once during each 10-year accreditation period (see proposed calendar).
- D. The review of each of the key competencies and foundations will have the following components:
 1. A working group of interested faculty to undertake, with the guidance and support from the Director of Academic Assessment, the assessment for each requirement area.
 2. A critical examination of learning goals for the targeted foundation/key competency to determine the need for any revisions.¹ (N.B. If learning goals are not in place, the task will be to develop appropriate learning goals for the requirement.)
 3. Extensive review of student enrollment in classes that meet each requirement in order to ascertain the following:
 - a. Number of aggregate and average number of courses students take that meet that particular requirement;
 - b. Number of aggregate and average number of courses students take within and outside of major areas;

¹ Revisions will be approved according to current governance structure.

- c. Student classifications when meeting the targeted requirement (e.g. first year, senior);
 - d. Most popular ways to meet the requirements in the period since the last review of the targeted requirement.
4. Review of coursework meeting each requirement, using the following methods:
 - a. Mapping of course objectives to learning goals for targeted area;
 - b. Review by departments/programs to determine which of their offered courses can or should be offered in the targeted area and whether these courses appropriately address the learning goals of the targeted area;
 - c. Review by Curriculum Committee to determine continued inclusion of courses in meeting the foundation/competency.
 5. Assessment of student learning, using the following methods:
 - a. Direct assessments of artifacts (essays, projects, or other outcomes) generated by students. (To be completed by the faculty working group.);
 - b. Indirect assessments through surveys, focus groups or other methods of student and faculty experiences in the targeted area.
 6. Summary report to all faculty of the review, including recommendations for changes.

2. Specialization

Assessment of specialization is thoroughly addressed by the departmental/program assessment and will not be overviewed here.

3. Key Competencies

The key competencies of diversity, second language, and mathematics proficiency and quantitative literacy will be assessed in the process described for foundations and key competencies above.

Oral Proficiency

- i. Oral Proficiency will be assessed at the department/program level.
- ii. At a minimum, oral proficiency will be addressed during each seven-year program review.
- iii. The Director of Academic Assessment will annually identify department/program reviews' assessments of oral proficiency.

Writing Key Competency

- i. At a minimum, the writing key competency will be addressed during each seven-year program review.
- ii. Since the writing key competency is addressed both at the program level and at the broader curricular level, it will be addressed both through the First-Year Preceptorial assessment process and through the foundations and key competencies assessment process, as outlined above under 1.D.
- iii. The Director of Academic Assessment will annually identify department/program reviews' assessments of the writing key competency.

Information Literacy and Informed Use of Technology

- i. At a minimum, information literacy and informed use technology outcomes will be addressed during each seven-year program review.
- ii. Continued assessment by Library with regard to their programs and instruction, the appropriate use of technology, and learning outcomes.
- iii. The Director of Academic Assessment will annually identify department/program reviews' assessments of information literacy and informed use of technology.

4. Experiential Learning

- i. At a minimum, experiential learning will be addressed during each seven-year program review, i.e., each department/program reviews the ways in which students in their programs meet the Experiential Learning requirement.
- ii. Indirect assessment of Experiential Learning is part of the "Six Month Out Survey" conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and reported to the Center for Career and Pre-Professional Development.
- iii. Senior and alumni surveys conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment since April of 2012 have included questions regarding the students' experiential learning. These data will serve as a basis for the development of a more in-depth assessment of this requirement and will also aid the appropriate programs and offices as they develop the best processes for ensuring that students complete the Experiential Learning requirement in accordance with the college's intentions in setting the requirement.
- iv. Specific opportunities for Experiential Learning (e.g. off-campus study, internships, independent research) will be assessed as part of the regular seven-year assessment process for Knox graduation requirements as outlined above in 1.D.

5. Educational Plan

- i. The newly appointed Associate Dean for Faculty Development has been charged with undertaking a review of the college's academic advising system and will do so in collaboration with the Registrar and with assistance from the Director of Academic Assessment. This full-scale review will include a focused assessment of the current implementation of the Educational Plan. The goal is to aid faculty as they develop the best processes for ensuring that students complete the Educational Plan requirement in accordance with the college's intentions in setting the requirement.
 - ii. Indirect assessment of the perceived value of the Educational Plan has been included in all senior survey and alumni surveys conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment since April of 2012. These data will serve as a basis for the development of more in-depth assessment of this requirement.
 - iii. Assessment of the Educational Plan is part of the regular seven-year assessment process for Knox graduation requirements as outlined above in 1.D.
-