

Department of American Studies
Assessment of Student Learning Plan
University of New Mexico

A. College, Department and Date

1. College: Arts and Sciences
2. Department: American Studies
3. Date: October 31, 2012

B. Academic Program of Study*

B.A. American Studies

C. Contact Person(s) for the Assessment Plan

Gabriel Melendez, Chair, gabriel@unm.edu

D. Broad Program Goals & Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

[Attach Cover Sheet for Student Learning Outcomes and associated materials.]

OR

[List below:]

1. Broad Program Learning Goals for this Degree/Certificate Program

- A. Critical understanding of the culture, society and politics of the United States.
- B. Knowledge of the place of the United States in the world, and the Southwest in the United States.
- C. Comprehension of the history of struggles for social and environmental justice in the United States

2. List of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for this Degree/Certificate Program

- A.1. Students demonstrate an ability to communicate fundamental theories and interdisciplinary methodological approaches to the study of culture in the United States.¹
- B.1. Students demonstrate a competency, and can conduct research in, at least one of the following concentrations: Cultural Studies; Southwest Studies; Environment, Science, and Technology; Popular Culture; Gender Studies; Race, Class and Ethnicity.
- C.1. Students demonstrate an understanding of the history and development of American Studies as a discipline.

E. Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Plan

¹ Academic Program of Study is defined as an approved course of study leading to a certificate or degree reflected on a UNM transcript. A graduate-level program of study typically includes a capstone experience (e.g. thesis, dissertation, professional paper or project, comprehensive exam, etc.).

All programs are expected to measure some outcomes annually and to measure all priority program outcomes at least once over two consecutive three-year review cycles. Describe below the plan for the next three years of assessment of program-level student learning outcomes.

1. Student Learning Outcomes

[Insert at least 2-5 priority learning outcomes that will be assessed by the unit over the next three years. Each unit will select which of its learning outcomes to assess.]

Relationship to UNM Student Learning Goals (insert the program SLOs and check all that apply):

University of New Mexico Student Learning Goals

Program SLOs	Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility
A1. Students can apply the fundamental theories and interdisciplinary methodological approaches to the study of culture in the United States.	XX	XX	
B.1. Students can apply their knowledge of at least one of the following concentrations: Cultural Studies; Southwest Studies; Environment, Science, and Technology; Popular Culture; Gender Studies; Race, Class and Ethnicity.	XX	XX	

2. How will learning outcomes be assessed?

A. What:

- i. We will assess SLO A.1 and B.1. by: 1) evaluating written and oral work conducted in American Studies 285 by evaluating whether students can write well organized and argued papers and demonstrate an understanding of fundamental theories in the study of U.S. culture; 2) evaluating presentations and written work in the senior seminar AMST 485 to determine if students can conduct research

using accepted research methods and demonstrate a competency in at least one department concentration; and 3) assessing the senior major's exit survey.

ii. The written and oral work assessed in American Studies 285 and in the senior seminar is a direct measure. The senior major's survey is an indirect assessment of student abilities.

iii. Criteria for success will include the following outcomes: 1) Based on a review of written work in AMST 285 and 485, more than 75% of students will be able to demonstrate effective research capacity, writing quality, and theoretical competency.

B. Who: The program's assessment will include evidence from a sample of students in American Studies 285 and in American Studies 485, the senior seminar. We will select a random sample of four papers from each class. This represents a sample size of approximately 25% of 285 and 40% of the senior seminar. We will assess all of the major's exit survey.

3. When will learning outcomes be assessed? When and in what forum will the results of the assessment be discussed?

At the end of Spring 2013, the undergraduate director will survey the results of the undergraduate assessment tools and describe how well students achieve desired outcomes. The Director will collect a report from the instructor of AMST 285 and 485. This data will be used as the basis for assessing whether students are obtaining the knowledge and skills valued by the department. During the first faculty meeting of Fall 2013, the undergraduate director will present the report and the faculty will consider how best to address areas of weakness. If changes are to be made to instruction or mentoring, the undergraduate director will coordinate with appropriate faculty. This pattern will be repeated each of the following two years.

4. What is the unit's process to analyze/interpret assessment data and use results to improve student learning?

1. The entire faculty will consider the results of outcomes assessment. In addition, each course instructor will inform students about assessment expectations at the beginning of each semester. The undergraduate director will analyze data and prepare an annual report for the faculty.

2. The director of undergraduate studies will evaluate the assessment mechanisms. The faculty will recommend appropriate changes to the curriculum design and pedagogy in response to the assessment report.

3. Recommendations for curricular and pedagogic change will be generated at the Fall faculty meeting in which we discuss the assessment report. In addition the outcomes assessment committee will meet each semester to evaluate the assessment mechanism.