

STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN (SOAP)-AY 2010/2011

I. Mission Statement

The Department of Geography is committed to provide effective teaching, advising and research opportunities to prepare and motivate students to apply the spatially based analytical tools of Geography to the study of social and environmental problems that range in scale from local concerns to global issues.

II. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

Goal 1: The Department's graduates should understand and analyze spatial relationships.

Objective 1.1: They will understand and interpret the distribution, processes and linkages between culture, economy, urbanization, agriculture, politics and language.

Objective 1.2: They will understand and interpret the lithosphere, atmosphere and hydrosphere and biosphere.

Objective 1.3: They will understand and interpret the interrelationships between landforms, weather, water and ecosystems.

Goal 2: The Department's graduates should understand, analyze, and critique human and environment interactions.

Objective 2.1: They should explain and critically evaluate how human activities modify physical and biotic environments.

Objective 2.2: They should explain and critically evaluate how environments affect humans as related to environmental pollution, environmental change and natural hazards.

Goal 3: The Department's graduates should define and use basic geography tools and techniques.

Objective 3.1: They will be able to read and interpret maps.

Objective 3.2: They will be able to construct maps.

Objective 3.3: They will be able to perform quantitative analysis and interpret the

results.

Objective 3.4: They will be able to perform basic or advanced geospatial analyses using Geographic Information Systems and/or remote sensing.

Goal 4: The Department’s graduates should understand, analyze, and compare/contrast global regions.

Objective 4.1: They should define, compare, and contrast how regions are defined politically, economically and culturally.

Objective 4.2: They should understand how various factors influence perceptions of regions.

Goal 5: The Department’s graduates should be able to read and understand research literature and engage in productive research activities.

Objective 5.1: They should demonstrate and integrate an understanding of the scientific method.

Objective 5.2: They should explain and critically evaluate research in geography.

Objective 5.3: They should understand and apply basic measurement techniques as they relate to their research objectives.

Goal 6: The Department’s graduates should demonstrate professional communication skills.

Objective 6.1: They should write using appropriate spelling, grammar and composition skills.

Objective 6.2: They should write using appropriate citations.

2 Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses X Learning Outcomes)

OBJ	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	4.2	5.1	5.2	5.3	6.1	6.2
2																
4																
5																
7																
20																
25																
30																
111		E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E

112		E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
114		E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
115		E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
118		E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
122		E	E	E	E	E		E				E	E	E	E	E
127	E	E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
128		E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
132	I			E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
135				E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
139T		E	E	E	E	E						E	E	E	E	E
140						E	I	E	I			E	E	E	E	E
141						E	I	E	I			R	R	R	R	R
142						R	E	R	E			R	R	R	R	R
143						R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R
149	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R
150	R	R	R	R	R	R		R		R	R	R	R	R	R	R
151		R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R	R	R	R	R	R
152		R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R			R	R	R	R	R
160	R			R	R	R		R		R	R	R	R	R	R	R
161	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
162	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
163	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
164	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
165	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
166	R					R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
167	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
170T	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
171T	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
172	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
173	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
174	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
175T	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
176	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
177T	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
178	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
179	R			R	R	R				R	R	R	R	R	R	R
181	R			R	R	R						R	R	R	R	R
184	R			R	R	R						R	R	R	R	R
187T	R			R	R	R						R	R	R	R	R
190																
191T																
192																
194W																
195																

I=introduced, R=reinforced, E=emphasized

3 Assessment Methods

Direct Measures

1. The department will maintain a portfolio of completed student papers and projects to be reviewed by department committee.
 - a. The department will maintain a portfolio of completed student papers and projects to be reviewed by faculty committee at the end of each academic year. Each year the papers/projects will be only from either a human, physical or techniques course and will be evaluated with their corresponding objectives. All objectives using this measurement will therefore be covered in a three-year period.
 - b. The department will construct and apply three scoring rubrics to evaluate the papers and projects collected each academic year (appropriate to either human, physical or techniques courses).
2. The department will develop a senior project or senior culminating experience.
 - a. The senior project involves a written paper and/or oral presentation that illustrates the students' analytical skills, competence with geography tools and techniques, awareness of place and a spatial perspective, and understanding of relationships between humans and environment.
3. Pre- and post- testing will be implemented in several courses.

Indirect Measures *(Alumni Survey is required)*

1. The department will conduct an alumni survey every 3 years to assess the employment status and graduate school placement of our undergraduate majors.
 - a. The survey will include questions about individual job placement, post-graduate school placement and will be sent to each undergraduate geography alumnus. The department staff will organize the returned information into a database and a summary of the data will be provided to faculty and included in the self-assessment report.
2. The department will conduct a senior survey to measure students' self-evaluations of advanced knowledge and of the program's success.

4 Student Learning Outcomes X Assessment Methods Matrix

OBJ	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	4.2	5.1	5.2	5.3	6.1	6.2
Student portfolio	X			X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Senior project	X			X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Pre and post test	X	X	X		X	X	X									
Alumni survey	X									X	X					
Senior survey	X									X	X	X				

5 Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations

Assessment Activity	Year 1 AY 09/10	Year 2 AY 10/11	Year 3 AY 11/12	Year 4 AY 12/13	Year 5 AY 13/14
Student portfolio					
Faculty subcommittee	X				
Scoring rubric	X	X			
Implementation			X		
Senior project					
Design				X	
Implementation					
Pre and post test					
Design			X		
Implementation				X	
Alumni survey					
Improvement	X				
Implementation		X			X
Senior survey					
Design			X		
Implementation					X
Self-assessment report					X
Advisory board			X	X	X

6 Closing the Loop - Summary Evaluation, Curriculum Adjustment, and Reporting

Assessment for AY 2009/2010:

A scoring rubric was developed by the Assessment Coordinator for analysis of student papers. The results, which included examples of varying student performance, were included in the Spring 2010 Annual Report. Based on the analysis, five future changes were suggested for improving Goal 6.

Assessment for AY 2010/2011:

The department will develop three separate rubrics (to correspond to course and objectives) to better assess the student portfolio component. The rubrics will be created by the department as a whole and will be implemented again in AY 11/12.

The alumni survey will be implemented and analyzed by the Assessment Coordinator.

Changes for SOAP AY 2010/2011:

As a result of our last assessment and ongoing assessment support, the following changes have been made to this year's SOAP:

- The number of goals/objectives was slightly reduced as to avoid overlap and/or outcomes that cannot be easily measured.
- The curriculum map was adjusted to reflect the changes in the goals/objectives.
- The direct measures (particularly the student portfolio) were written with greater specificity.
- The timeline was adjusted for better manageability.