Department of Humanities

Program Planning Report

August 2012

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9. Summary
Overview

The Department of Humanities believes that an interdisciplinary study of culture effectively promotes the kind of skills global citizens need today: advanced oral/written communication skills, critical/creative thinking skills, global literacy, cultural awareness, and analytical skills.

At the end of the last program planning review process, the Program Planning Committee Report to the Provost stated: “The main problems facing the department involve enrollment management and coordination of the diversity of programs in the department.” There were specific suggestions, for example, to enhance ongoing assessment efforts and to consider curricular changes “to unify the department curricula and programs.”

During the review period, programs in the department experienced enhanced cooperation and increased sharing of human and other resources. Faculty hired into one program are teaching in other programs; more courses are cross-listed by multiple programs; and recently hired faculty have training that is even more interdisciplinary than that of their predecessors.

Against this background, we created a BA degree curriculum that will maximize the benefits to students of these trends in faculty hiring and integration of programs. Effective Fall 2012, this revised Humanities BA Program will have substantial shared coursework for students in all concentrations, including common introductory and capstone courses (Hum 85, Hum 101 and Hum 190). For the new program, we have revised courses as well as created new ones to assure students will have more common experiences, more contact with each other, and an enhanced sense of community. At the same time, we have allowed for substantial specialization (18 or more units) for students in each concentration.

Perhaps most importantly, we have spent considerable time discussing what elements of theory, method, study skills, and ideas all students should learn in being trained in various areas of interdisciplinary and comparative studies. This resulted in a program design that exposes students to these elements early and often, and allows students to engage them critically while building their intellectual orientation.

Strategically, we will save resources by having a larger pool of Humanities majors to fill classes, especially non-GE classes. In addition, the total number of classes needed for students majoring in the department will decrease. For example, separate theory and capstone courses for Religious Studies majors will be made unnecessary through making Humanities 101 and Humanities 190 available to them. Moreover, those entering the Liberal Arts concentration of the Humanities major, who would currently be in the Liberal Arts emphasis of the Liberal Studies major, will enroll in more of the department's own interdisciplinary courses and in fewer courses in disciplines outside the department. This model will benefit these Humanities/Liberal Arts students as well as benefit the department strategically. Overall, the Liberal Studies Teacher Preparation program will continue to be popular; and Liberal Studies/Liberal Arts and Religious Studies students will greatly enhance the number and diversity of students in the Humanities BA program, enabling us to take advantage of the cost savings related to a new economy of scale.

The Creative Arts BA Program was also revised (effective Fall 2010), at the behest of the Creative Arts Program Coordinator, a new probationary faculty member hired during the review period. A
special topics course (CA 174) and a capstone course (CA 178, revised as “Senior Seminar”) were developed as part of the process.

The department’s Liberal Studies Teacher Preparation Program, along with a parallel program in Creative Arts Teacher Preparation, will continue to train and graduate students who aim to enter Elementary Education Credential programs at SJSU or elsewhere. During the review period, we established impaction criteria for the Liberal Studies program (notably, a 2.60 GPA for transfer students), aiming to attract better-prepared students, who will be able to achieve the GPA needed to enter SJSU’s credential program (2.87).

1.1. Goals

In consonance with the mission statements of SJSU and the College of Humanities & Arts, the Department of Humanities has established the following goals:

- Investigate topics using interdisciplinary approaches;
- Appreciate, understand and celebrate diversity, while knowing how to identify and bracket one’s own cultural bias;
- Think critically and creatively, and be willing to question authority and express rational skepticism;
- Understand and appreciate creations of the human imagination and intellect;
- Synthesize various forms of knowledge to solve aesthetic, social and cultural problems;
- Read, write and speak as members of the educated public and as citizens prepared to face controversy;
- Develop and integrate performance and research skills, including information literacy;
- Become concerned and involved citizens, speaking on controversial issues and acting to influence the course of history;
- Engage in informed discussion and reflection about human values.

1.2. Programs

During the review period, the Department of Humanities offered the following degree programs:

- B.A. in Creative Arts and BA in Creative Arts Teacher Preparation
- B.A. in Humanities (revisions planned for Fall 2012)
- B.A. in Liberal Studies (revisions planned for Fall 2012)
- B.A. in Religious Studies (scheduled for elimination Fall 2012)

NOTE: Effective Fall 2012, this revised list of programs will exist:

- B.A. in Creative Arts and B.A. Creative Arts, Teacher Preparation
- B.A. in Humanities with six concentrations
  - Concentration in American Studies
  - Concentration in Asian Studies
Concentration in European Studies
Concentration in Liberal Arts
Concentration in Middle East Studies
Concentration in Religious Studies

• B.A. in Liberal Studies, Preparation for Teaching, and
  Concentration in Cross-Cultural Studies in American and Mexican Education
  (unavailable for 2012-13 due to suspension of CSU IP programs in Mexico)

In addition to the above Majors, the department offers Minors in American Studies, Asian Studies, Creative Arts, Humanities, Middle East Studies, and Religious Studies.

The department also offers many options within SJSU’s General Education program, including SJSU studies (see section 5 below).

1.3. Students

As detailed in section 8 below (RDE analysis), the department has been able to meet enrollment targets for the period under review and, through its role in general education at SJSU, serves students from over 60 majors outside the department.

The headcount enrollment for undergraduate majors has in some cases increased slightly (Creative Arts and Humanities), while decreasing in other areas (Liberal Studies and Religious Studies). Advising is accessible and effective, and, as far as we know, graduation rates are similar to or better than university averages. There is uncertainty in the data for majors in Creative Arts, Humanities, and Religious Studies because the numbers are not statistically significant (see section 8).

According to our various assessment reports, students who graduate from our BA programs have attained the BA Program SLOs (student learning objectives) to a high measure. We are always looking for better ways to serve students in our department’s majors, as indicated by the faculty’s effort to create the revised Humanities BA Program that will be in effect in Fall 2012.

1.4. Faculty

Currently, the Humanities Department is made up of 33 faculty members: 9 full-time tenured, 2 in FERP, 2 probationary, and 20 temporary. Of the full-time tenured and probationary faculty, 6 are female and 5 are male; 9 are white, 2 are Asian.
Humanities Department faculty are very active on and off campus. As detailed below under “Synergies,” they play major roles performing university level service. On campus, they have been involved in colloquia sponsored, for example, by the Institute for Social Responsibility Ethics and Education and our Dr. Chao-te Lin Buddhist Studies Endowment. In addition to this, they have been instrumental in setting up a range of public lectures and forums under the auspices of the department’s programs in areas such as American Studies, Asian Studies, Middle East Studies, and Religious Studies.

Off campus, they regularly attend annual conferences held by the academic organizations in their areas of expertise, ranging from the American Studies Association (ASA), American Academy of Religion (AAR), and Association for Asian Studies (AAS) to the Philosophy of Education Society (PES), the American Philosophical Association (APA), the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA), and Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness SAC). Several have played leading roles in their national or regional academic organizations, for example, serving as President of NAVA (Scot Guenter), President of AAR Western Region (Jennifer Rycenga), and President of SAC (Mira Amiras). In many instances the papers they present at conferences become publications in refereed journals and compilations. In addition to the resulting journal articles and book chapters, faculty are also active writing and editing published books. Their recent impactful books include these: Todd Ormsbee, *The Meaning of Gay: Interaction, Publicity, and Community among Homosexual Men in 1960s San Francisco* (Lexington Books, 2010); Lee Gilmore, *Theatre in a Crowded Fire: Ritual and Spirituality at the Burning Man Festival* (UC Press, 2010), Susan Verducci (with Michael Katz), ed., *Democracy, Education and the Moral Life* (Springer, 2008); Shannon Rose Riley (with Lynette Hunter), ed., *Mapping Landscapes for Performance as Research: Scholarly Acts and Creative Cartographies* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); and Scot M. Guenter, Ed. in Chief, *The Washington Flag Congress 2011: Proceedings of the 24th International Congress of Vexillology*. August 2011, Washington, DC. 2 vols. Trenton, NJ: North American Vexillological Association, 2011.

2. Strengths

Since the last Program Planning review in 2006-07, the Department of Humanities has continued to operate in a severely static budgetary environment. Nevertheless, the department has maintained the following strengths:

2.1. Wide array of programs, emphases, and interdisciplinary courses of study
   Unique programs to CSU (Creative Arts, Creative Arts Teacher Preparation, Liberal Studies Concentration in Cross-Cultural Studies in Mexican and American Education)
   Unique programs to SJSU (Humanities Honors, American Civilization)
   Teacher preparation programs (Creative Arts, Liberal Studies)

2.2. Courses and programs that are key to the mission of SJSU (e.g. integrative learning, global, inclusive, broad understanding, civic awareness, building learning communities)
   a. Teacher preparation programs (Creative Arts, Liberal Studies)
   b. Humanities Honors (provides integrated four-semester, six units/semester program for a comprehensive coverage of non-science lower-division GE)
   c. American Civilization (provides integrated two-semester, six units/semester program for a substantial coverage of lower-division GE)
   d. Religious Studies offers four courses for lower-division GE (areas C2, E)
   e. Asian Studies (interdisciplinary coverage of Pacific Rim)
f. European Studies, Asian Studies, Middle East Studies, Religious Studies, Creative Arts, and American Studies all increase global awareness
g. All programs provide substantial San Jose State Studies (upper-division GE), in both areas “S” and “V”, as well as departmental 100W (“Z”). These courses (HUM 114, 128, RELS 122, 145, 162, 191, AMS 159, 169, CA 172, 173) have all had long histories, and established good reputations on campus as interesting, well-taught courses

2.3. Interdisciplinarity permeates all areas in the department
   a. Course content incorporates scholarly work from diverse academic fields
   b. Interdisciplinary courses are required for majors and minor in all programs
   c. Graduate preparation, degrees, and publications of full-time faculty cover a range of academic disciplines (with degrees earned, for example, in American Studies, Anthropology, Asian Studies, Classics, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Religion and Culture, Religion and Social Ethics)
   d. Sustained pedagogical reflection on team teaching, with resultant implementation

2.4. Full-time faculty (and some lecturers, notably) have high participation rates and make substantial contributions through campus citizenship responsibilities (boards, committees, arranging outside speakers, searches, task forces, service learning, community activities, etc.)

2.5. Our graduates have a high success rate (to the extent that we have been able to track them systematically)
   a. Placement in graduate schools, and successful completion of post-baccalaureate degrees
   b. Job placement
   c. Reports back about excellent preparation from instruction in department

2.6. Shared curricular focus on writing and oral communication skills, cooperative learning in groups, and being an educated person engaged in critical thinking

2.7. Successful integration of department’s curriculum, assessment, and faculty (see Synergies section)

2.8. Shared commitment across programs to student success for majors in Liberal Studies for Teacher Preparation and Creative Arts Teacher Preparation programs

2.9. Responsive to various student interests and learning styles through our ability to offer students highly specialized interdisciplinary preparation (e.g., study of religion, study of creativity, teacher preparation), area-focused interdisciplinary preparation (e.g., American, Asian, European, and Middle Eastern studies), and integrative preparation (e.g., critical thinking, broad general knowledge)

2.10. Strong structural support for advising in the department and cooperation among faculty who provide advising
   a. Liberal Studies has half-time student services professional (with MA in counseling)
   b. Assigned Time for coordinators/advisors
   c. Guidance for students creating highly individualized majors
   d. Coordinated GE and major/minor advising

3. Challenges

3.1. Need for increase in full-time faculty
   a. Retired (including FERP) faculty need to be replaced, but there has been a low-level of recent faculty recruitment campus-wide, and prospects for conducting future recruitments are dim
   b. Faculty planning retirement will exacerbate this problem
   c. Teaching and committee work-loads have reached dangerous levels: there are too few faculty available for committee service, advising, assessment activities, and so forth
3.2. Need to develop lower-division courses to provide preparation for majors and to foster
development of learning communities (in BA programs now featuring upper division curricula)
   a. Creative Arts BA program
   b. Revised Humanities BA program
3.3. Outreach and Recruitment challenges
   a. Increase visibility for programs with smaller numbers of majors; growing numbers of majors
      in the revised Humanities BA program
   b. Explain interdisciplinary programs to students arriving from high schools or community
      colleges
   c. Confront perceptions regarding impaction of Liberal Studies Teacher Preparation program
      and reduced speed to graduation
   d. Increase staff support of efforts to increase for visibility/recruitment activities
3.4. Difficulties in assessment
   a. Programs with substantial classes outside of the department (e.g. Liberal Studies for Teacher
      Training)
   b. Department programs with small numbers of majors targeted for assessment
3.5. Expanding interdisciplinary minors and majors in conjunction with other departments
   a. ‘Natural’ combinations of majors/minors (e.g. Religion and Journalism, Religion and Legal
      Studies, Creative Arts and Business, etc.
   b. Contacting advisors in other departments
   c. Developing majors across departments
3.6. Time and resources to plan and hold more public events
   a. Development of annual programs
   b. Cultivating department-wide support for such programs
   c. Identifying alumni and inducing their involvement
3.7. Fundraising: finding time and creating effective strategies

4. Synergies

4.1. Department programs create learning communities and student cohorts that are ongoing for
   students across the university, as in Humanities Honors and American Civilization; majors within
   the department, especially in Creative Arts and Liberal Studies (where students often take the
   same classes together), likewise form strong cohorts both within and outside of the department
4.2. Most major programs require taking classes across programs in the department, and across
   departments within the university
   a. Active collaboration with departments across campus
   b. Revised Humanities major will enhance this level of cooperation
   c. Faculty are shared with programs across the department, and with departments across the
      university (especially in the cases of Humanities Honors and American Civilization
      programs)
4.3. Many Humanities faculty have been involved with university-level committees:
   a. WASC Steering Committee
   b. University Advising/GREAT Committee
   c. Teacher Preparation committees: AUTEC (chair) and others
   d. BA Assessment (campus facilitator)
   e. Decanal Search committee (chair)
   f. Presidential search committee
   g. University Sabbatical Leaves Committee (chair)
University RTP Committee
Academic Senate
Administrator evaluation committees
Campus Reading Program committee (chair)

4.4. Campus-Community Synergies
   a. Service Learning
   b. Creative Arts Internships
   c. Student and Faculty work with non-profits, visits to community institutions
   d. Field work in public schools, K-12
   e. Santa Clara County Office of Education (Visual and Performing Arts division)

5. General Education

Assessment Schedules, Reports, and Syllabi (Appendix GE): The department has established a clear schedule for the assessment of all its GE courses. Following this schedule, the department files annual assessment reports for each course; these historical reports are located in Appendix GE. A recent sample syllabus and a summary assessment report for each course are also provided in this appendix. Note that the historical reports do not exist for pre-2009 assessments, because the old GE policy did not involve annual reports. Moreover, there was a moratorium on submission of any assessment/recertification documents when the new policy was being drafted, debated, and approved by the Academic Senate.

The following courses are covered in Appendix GE:

5.1. American Studies GE courses:

   Core GE (multiple areas): AMS 1AB (American Civilization Program)
   Area S: AMS 169 (American Dream)
   Area V: AMS 159 (Nature In World Cultures)

5.2. Creative Arts GE courses:

   Area S: CA 172 (Arts in U.S. Society)
   Area V: CA 173 (Contemporary World Arts)
   Area Z: CA 100W

5.3. Humanities GE courses
Core GE (multiple areas): HUM 1AB/2AB: Humanities Honors Program

Area V: HUM 114 (Legacy of Asia) and HUM 128 (Perspectives on the Twentieth Century: The West in a Global Context)

5.4. Religious Studies GE courses

Area C2: RELS 70A (Western Religions), RELS 70B (Eastern Religions), and RELS 90 (Bible, History and Literature)

Area E: Death and Dying in Religions

Area S: RELS 162 (Religion and Political Controversy in the U.S.) and RELS 191 (Religion in America)

Area V: RELS 122 (Magic, Science, and Religion) and RELS 145 (Middle Eastern Traditions)

6. WASC Program Outcomes Rubric

The Humanities Department held a meeting to discuss progress in assessing students in each program, using the WASC rubric as a guideline, after which each program coordinator completed an assessment report. The resulting reports are in Appendix C. What follows here is a table showing how rigorous program coordinators were in applying the WASC rubric. Overall, we found that, as we revise our learning objectives and, in the case of the Humanities BA Program, our curriculum, we need to redevelop and improve most aspects of our BA assessment regime.

Basic Results: Assessing the Quality of BA Program Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WASC Criterion</th>
<th>Creative Arts</th>
<th>Humanities</th>
<th>Liberal Studies</th>
<th>Religious Studies</th>
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<td>Comprehensive List</td>
<td>Initial-Emergent</td>
<td>Developed</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessable Outcomes</td>
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<td>Developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Student Experience</td>
<td>Emerging-Developed</td>
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</table>
7. Student Learning

Recognizing the importance of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) with quantitative as well as qualitative measurements, as part of this Program Planning process, the Department of Humanities is revising its SLOs for each of its BA programs. Since these SLOs are only now being adopted, the assessment summaries that follow reflect the use of existing SLOs and, in part, the reasons for developing new ones.

7.1. Creative Arts BA Student Learning Assessment

In Fall 2008, the Creative Arts (CA) Program hired its first full-time coordinator and faculty member. Prior to this, four CA SLOs and one Creative Arts Teacher Prep (CATP) SLO had been developed and mapped onto existing courses and a timeline created for collecting, discussing, and implementing changes. Since then, the CA Program has undergone a substantial curricular revision and there have already been some changes made in the ways that SLOs and classes are linked together for assessment. It has become even clearer that the CA SLOs need a substantial revision in order to more clearly articulate what CA majors in the revised and changing BA Program learn in the course of their study. There is tremendous need and potential to both revise old and create new SLOs and to remap them onto our expanded curriculum, which now includes a Senior Seminar (in its first semester, Spring 2012). Revising SLOs will be the first important step in developing a plan and method for tracking student learning across the major. The second step will require the development of a new assessment plan that would track student learning in two broad areas; one from the introductory CA172, The Arts in US Society to the capstone CA178, Senior Seminar and another that would track from the introductory CA175 Seminar in Creative Process to both CA176 Creativity and Creative Leadership and the capstone CA178. The first of these arcs will have something to do with content in interdisciplinary cultural studies in the arts and written and oral communication and the second with leadership, creativity, innovation, and practice-based research in the arts. This type of tracking in two key areas related to the major will become clearer once the new SLOs are developed. At the conclusion of the program planning process, new timelines and new SLOs for the CA Program will be reported to the Office of Undergraduate Studies. Here is a list of the new SLOs:

Creative Arts BA Student Learning Objectives

1. Perform interdisciplinary analysis of various forms of creative arts, attending to connections and commonalities as well as differences, in both written and oral formats.
2. Identify and articulate various and sometimes contested functions and purposes of the creative arts.
3. Demonstrate the ability to develop and use practice-based methodologies in research projects.
4. Identify, select, use and cite information sources appropriately.
5. Create class projects that demonstrate innovative thinking.
6. Collaborate effectively with other students in the completion of team projects.

A final necessary step to complete the trajectory of assessment from declaration of the major to graduation is to develop a required lower division course in the CA Program. That Creative Arts still does not have a single lower division course of its own is an area of significant concern. Without one,
there is very little possibility of developing common lower division knowledge and even less possibility of really tracking student learning in the major.

On the basis of the assessment records, student work in some SLO areas are superior or adequate, according to the rubrics we used. In CA100W and CA172, for example, there have been general improvements in writing after a department-wide initiative in argumentation, which came out of the assessment process and was documented, in joint fashion, in 2009-2010 BA program assessment documents. However, CA has never had a capstone class prior to Spring 2012, nor do assessment records from 2007 through 2009 provide statistical information on demonstration of student learning. They focused, instead, on description of assignments, etc., which is more of an assessment of course content and the syllabus in terms of SLOs than documentation of whether students achieved SLOs. We have begun to track this data only in the last two academic years (see appendix of CA assessment reports). But now that we do so, and once the three steps indicated above are completed, we should be able to successfully assess student learning in the CA major. Because the CA Program attracts many students who are able to transfer in from other majors on campus and advance more quickly to graduation, it is possible that we will have statistically insignificant data from time to time because students occasionally take courses out of sequence. We won’t know until we see a full and effective assessment model in action; and it is possible that solutions to such situations will be found in advising or through offering some courses more often.

Assessment of the Creative Arts Teacher Preparation (CATP) major is also undergoing an equally thorough overhaul. Currently, it shares the first four SLOs with the CA Program and has one SLO, unique to itself, regarding the use of the arts in teaching other curricular material in the State of California. There has never been a core of SLOs related to the Teacher Preparation majors (Liberal Studies and Creative Arts)—and it makes more sense for these two programs to share common SLOs than it does for CA and CATP to share them. As part of this departmental review, we are creating a list of new SLOs for CATP, many of which will be shared with LSTP. At the conclusion of the program planning process, new timelines and new SLOs for the CATP Program will be reported to the Office of Undergraduate Studies. The LSTP SLOs are listed in the Liberal Studies section below.

7.2. Humanities BA Student Learning Assessment

In 2005 a timeline was created indicating the SLOs for which we would collect, discuss, and implement changes related to each of them. This timeline was later updated through spring 2011 to reflect our department’s five-year program planning cycle, 2006-2011. A separate document was developed to map courses to this schedule so that over the five-year period student work in American Studies 169, Humanities 100W, Humanities 114, Humanities 128, and Humanities 190 would be assessed. On the basis of the assessments, we can say that, with few exceptions, student work was very good, usually at one of the higher levels (accomplished or exemplary), according to the rubrics we used. Four of the affected courses are not only major courses but also general education courses (although Humanities 100W is more like a major course). It is heartening to note that the performance of Humanities majors in these courses was significantly higher than average. Even in the case of the one non-GE course, Humanities majors fared well. Commenting on data related to SLO 2 for fall 2010 from Humanities 190 (a senior seminar also required for Humanities minors and Liberal Studies
majors), Scot Guenter wrote: "This evidence suggests that our Humanities majors are doing well at this SLO, indeed, often near the top of the class for all majors represented."

It is also noteworthy, that, among students enrolled in Humanities 190, there were general improvements in writing after the department had taken certain steps that came out of the assessment process. First of all, Humanities 100W was made an official prerequisite for Humanities 190. Secondly, we asked instructors to focus on argumentation style writing, and we chose to perform the 2009-2010 BA program assessments in joint fashion, evaluating student writing for all four majors in the department. The concluding report by Susan Verducci (spring 2010) notes that the writing crisis had largely passed by that point, showing that the establishment of a prerequisite and our efforts to focus on student writing had paid off. The data on which she was commenting demonstrated conclusively that student writing in Humanities 190 was significantly better than writing in Humanities 100W.

Although assessment of the performance of Humanities majors indicates that they are achieving learning objectives at a high level, nonetheless we have work to do. This is because we have just revised the Humanities BA program (effective fall 2012) and are in the process of rewriting the SLOs. While some SLOs will remain, they will need to be mapped to different courses, namely, the revised BA programs required core courses: Humanities 85, Humanities 101, Humanities 160, and Humanities 190. At the conclusion of the program planning process, new timelines and new SLOs will be reported to the Office of Undergraduate Studies. What follows are the revised SLOs, including those for new concentrations (including Religious Studies, previously an independent BA Program, whose retrospective student learning report appears below).

Revised Humanities BA (including Liberal Arts Concentration) Student Learning Objectives:

1. Demonstrate the ability to frame questions and pursue answers to aesthetic, social, cultural and global problems using interdisciplinary methods
2. Demonstrate the ability to describe and compare the roles, impacts and ethical implications of ideas, texts, social movements, contemporary situations, and creations of the human imagination.
3. Demonstrate skill in written and verbal communication, including argumentation.
4. Demonstrate the ability to identify, select, use, and cite information sources appropriately.

Additional SLO: American, Asian, European, and Middle East Studies Concentrations:

1. Explain how current events and contemporary issues are understood with knowledge of the historical and cultural background of a particular world area (e.g., America, East Asia, Europe, or the Middle East), including processes of cultural formation, historical development, and social change.

Additional SLOs: Religious Studies Concentration

1. Demonstrate a high level of religious literacy, including the ability to articulate etic and emic perspectives for specific religions, and a functional understanding of at least five major world religious systems (e.g. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Sikhism, Jainism, a specific geographic set of indigenous religions [African, Australian, North American, South American, Pacific Islander, North Asian, pre-Christian European], Wicca, Afro-Caribbean religions)
2. Function adroitly within the interdisciplinary nature of comparative religious studies. Describe how religion, as a phenomenon, can be analyzed historically, philosophically, psychologically, sociologically, geographically, and artistically, as well as theologically. Demonstrate ability to write and speak about religions in a scholarly, civil, and respectful manner, using the academic discourses that have evolved for this purpose. Foster civil discourse about religion by encountering and engaging community members, faculty, and students who hold diverse views within and about religious traditions.

7.3. Liberal Studies BA Student Learning Assessment

Data collected previous to this self-study revealed a recurring weakness in argumentation as a rhetorical strategy. Indirect evidence of weaknesses in argumentation and writing included anecdotes from professors teaching our majors. Clear, clean writing and evidence-based argumentation were targeted for assessment and improvement as a department. As noted above, our first major assessment-driven policy change occurred in Spring 2007 when we made Humanities 100W a prerequisite for the Senior Seminar in Humanities (Hum 190). In Fall 2009, we instituted a curricular policy impacting all Humanities and Creative Arts 100W courses and the Senior Capstone (or other relevant Capstone-like courses). Each course now requires a writing assignment focusing on argumentation. Pedagogy in these classes shifted to support students in this area. Assignments were assessed using a shared rubric.

In Fall 2009, assessment of 126 student papers from seven separate upper division courses (four Capstone sections and 3 sections of 100W) revealed that 48% of students scored at the “Superior” level (4), 41% of students scored at the “Adequate” level (3), 7% of students scored at the “Emergent” level (2) and 3% of students scored at the “Inadequate” level (1). When these scores were disaggregated in terms of 100W students and Capstone students, important and significant differences appear. In the Capstone courses, 56% of students scored at the “Superior” level (4) compared to 30% in 100W; 38% scored at the “Adequate” level (3) compared to 49% in 100W; 6% scored at the “Emergent” level (2) compared to 10% in 100W; and no student scored at the “Inadequate” level (1) compared to 10% in 100W. Students in Capstone courses are scoring consistently higher than students in 100W.

When we disaggregate the departmental data on argumentation, Liberal Studies Teacher Preparation students consistently underperform on nearly all dimensions of argumentation compared to the other Humanities Department majors. These students take 14 of their 21 required upper division courses outside the department. Many of these are not Humanities courses; teacher preparation students are only required to take a total of 9 courses in humanities disciplines. Students in other departmental programs take 15 courses in the humanities. The problem can be seen starkly in the following: of the 111 units required by GE and our major, only 25 units are offered by our department. The structure of multiple subject teacher preparation at SJSU (6 separate majors, with core courses offered outside all these departments) may be problematic for our student learning in argumentation.

Teacher preparation students consistently scored well in their ability to successfully plan lessons for K-8 classrooms (the only SLO that separated the Liberal Arts from the Teacher Preparation majors). In the departmental curricular redesign effective Fall 2012, we were able to widen and refocus teacher
preparation SLOs to include understandings of the subject matter and pedagogy of K-8 schooling aligned with state and national standards. We will begin to assess these in Fall 2012. They are the following:

1. Frame questions and pursue answers to aesthetic, social, cultural and global issues using interdisciplinary methods
2. Describe and compare the roles, impacts and ethical implications of ideas, texts, social movements, contemporary situations, and creations of the human imagination
3. Demonstrate skill in written and verbal communication, including argumentation.
4. Identify, select, use and cite information sources appropriately
5. Demonstrate understanding of how to engage and support all K-8 students in learning
6. Demonstrate understanding of how to create and maintain effective learning environments for K-8 students
7. Demonstrate understanding of how to plan instruction and assess student learning
8. Demonstrate content and pedagogical knowledge in subjects taught in K-8 schools

7.4. Religious Studies BA Student Learning Assessment

With the coming change in the status of the Religious Studies program, the assessment reports for the past five years address a situation that, technically, will not exist beyond this just-completed academic year (2011-12). Furthermore, the department, in the light of the revamped major, has revised the SLOs for the department as a whole.

The combined departmental assessment report from Spring 2010 demonstrated how making the department’s 100W course(s) a prerequisite for the capstone courses marked a significant improvement in argumentation (the SLO examined that year). This salutary requirement for 100W to be taken as early as possible in students’ upper-division career has been continued into the new major. In general, encouraging students to take courses in a logical sequence has been, and will continue to be, part of the Religious Studies concentration within the Humanities major.

Assessment of the Religious Studies major over the past five years has been hampered by the paucity of majors in the program. We have been unable to offer the capstone course in Religious Studies (RELS 195) for the past two years; Religious Studies majors have had to enroll in Humanities 190 (Senior Seminar). This has made data collection difficult, with data collection and analysis limited to viewing 2-3 papers identifiable to Religious Studies seniors in HUM 190 and having informal discussions. Within that framework, though, and dating back to 2008, senior-level Religious Studies majors have demonstrated mastery, at the highest or next-to-highest levels, of the SLOs.

8. Required Data Element Analyses by BA Program (for OIR data, see Appendices A & B)

Before discussing five-year data related to the four existing BA Programs, we need to make a brief comment on the data in Exhibits 1-4, which reflect the healthy state of enrollments in our courses and the wide participation in them by majors from around the university as well as by majors in the four BA programs in our department.
The department has consistently achieved enrollment targets, or missed by only 2 or 3 percent, as seen in the table below. In fact, during the last five years, the department has been at 102.3% of target on average. (NOTE: The lower FTES figures after 2009-10 reflect the fact that Summer Session enrollments were not included in departmental FTES, because that session was no longer run as a state-supported operation.)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007-08</th>
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<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TARGET FTES</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EARNED FTES</td>
<td>461.6</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>486.1</td>
<td>411.5</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENTAGE</td>
<td>103.7</td>
<td>107.3</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>105.5</td>
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As evidence that we serve students from around the university, taking the example of “HUM” prefix courses reported on in RDE Exhibit 4 (Seats Occupied Spring 2012 All Courses Offered with Prefix HUM), there were 631 students from 65 majors enrolled in the courses. Naturally, the courses served students from our own largest major (Liberal Studies; 168 of 631 students) as well as from other large major programs on campus, such as Pre-Nursing (25), English (24), and Psychology (25).

In the four sections below, we offer reflections on RDEs that show either special problems to address or special progress toward university goals, such as improving graduations rates. At the start, we should note that much of the OIR data is not statistically significant due to the relatively small size of incoming FTF and UGT students and, in some cases, number of majors in a BA program. Numbers that are statistically significant in Exhibits 5-10 exist only for Liberal Studies majors. Therefore, the other reports use data other than, for example, OIR retention and graduation rates to comment on progress toward graduation in a given BA program. In one case, Creative Arts Program, the Program Coordinator (author of the report below) even worked with Sutee Sujitparapitaya, AVP for Institutional Research, to produce a set of data on the main source of entering students—Change of Major—other than enrollment as a freshmen or transfer student (Appendix B).

8.1. Creative Arts BA Programs

The Creative Arts Program is the second largest BA program in the Department of Humanities (Exhibit 7). The Program has also had an increasing number of degrees awarded per year over the last five-year period (Exhibit 8).

There are very few freshmen and transfer students who enroll at SJSU with a previously declared Creative Arts major. However, the lack of incoming first-year or transfer students is substantially mitigated because most students join the Creative Arts major through the change of major process—and most often in their junior or senior year, as data indicates in Appendix B (“Creative Arts Degree Awarded and Change of Major Analysis”).

Appendix B compares Creative Arts data against the larger control group of the College of Humanities and the Arts. When we compare the data sets, we see that CA change of major students come in more often as juniors, rather than as seniors (as do most college-wide change of majors). Because of the unique shape of the Creative Arts Program (which draws substantively from upper division courses in other arts areas), confused students are able to find a solution and integrate various
arts courses from across departments in order to progress toward graduation in a timely manner. In other words, it appears that Creative Arts provides an excellent service to the larger university community by attracting students that would otherwise not be making timely progress toward graduation and by helping them graduate often within only three semesters of changing majors to Creative Arts. This indicates that CA serves the university in terms of retention and graduation rates.

Creative Arts graduation rates are substantially higher (3rd year Graduation Analysis) than university rates. For example, the university’s average 3-year graduation rate for transfer students has been 45.8%; for Creative Arts, it was 62.7% (average) for students in the Fall 2006, Fall 2007 and Fall 2008 cohorts.

8.2. Humanities BA Program

When one looks at data related to retention and graduation, one realizes there were few students in the relevant cohorts entering SJSU as freshmen and transfer students. For example, from Fall 2000 through Fall 2004, an average of 2 FTF entered; from Fall 2004 through Fall 2008, an average of 3 UGT entered. Obviously these data are not statistically significant for the purpose of analyzing retention or graduation rates. Thus, OIR reports a 100% graduation rate for some years, and reports 0% for other years; and retention rates are similarly unreliable.

Looking at the number of degrees awarded is probably more meaningful. These increased significantly during the review period, as follows:

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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
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With only 4 FTEF entering in Fall 2004, and 2 UGT in Fall 2007, one might ask: How were there 9 degrees awarded in 2010/11? Obviously, the number of graduates included some students who joined the Humanities BA Program by change of major. In addition, it is clear that many students joined the major as juniors or seniors and, then, were moved quickly toward graduation. This explanation is supported by OIR data (Exhibit 6: Enrollment by Class Level, Headcount), which shows that, from Fall 2007 through Fall 2011, the average percentage of freshmen and sophomores (combined) in the major was only 27%. Also, this was a period during which the headcount for Humanities majors grew from 21 to 33, paralleling growth in the number of degrees awarded.

While we are proud of growth in the number of majors as well as in our efforts to help them graduate in a timely manner, we realize that by campus-wide standards, 33 is not a large number of majors. Therefore, we are taking actions to make it larger. First of all, we have revised the Humanities major (as explained more fully elsewhere in this report). Effective Fall 2012, a significant number of existing and entering students will join the Humanities major, with a Concentration in either Liberal Arts or Religious Studies, two BA programs that now exist outside the Humanities BA Program. Secondly, with our contagious enthusiasm for the new major we developed, we will implement a plan
to recruit Humanities majors from potential applicants outside SJSU, especially those at area community colleges who are likely to apply to SJSU.

In summary, an analysis of RDEs shows that, where the data reveal negative trends, we are taking action to make appropriate changes; where the data show we are contributing to university objectives—recruiting students and graduating them—we have been able to explain why and how this is so.

8.3 Liberal Studies BA Programs

Data show decreasing numbers of students applying (from 601 at its peak in the Fall of 2007 to 427 in the Fall of 2011). This equates to a nearly 30% difference. We attribute part of this decrease to declaring impaction in 2009, which raised the minimum GPA for entering Fall 2010 students to 2.60, and the drastically reduced number of Liberal Arts majors statewide. Fall show rates range from 23% to 32%, and transfer students consistently enroll and show at higher rates than first time freshmen (freshmen range 16-25%, and transfers 32-43%). Enrollment and show rates fluctuate, but have declined since their high in 2007.

Headcount enrollment and total FTE has declined over the past five years by 22% and 23%, respectively. However, enrollment in the Liberal Studies Teacher Preparation (LSTP) Emphasis remained steady over the same period of time. This is rather surprising given the lack of opportunities in K-8 education caused by the state’s fiscal crisis and in light of declining enrollments in education related fields across the CSU. Enrollment in the Liberal Arts Emphasis, on the other hand, has dramatically decreased. Current Spring 2012 enrollment in this program is 61, down from 188 in Fall 2007. We attribute part of the decrease to declaration of impaction in 2009, which raised the GPA required for admittance to 2.60. We also recently corrected identification errors of a large number of Teacher Preparation students who mistakenly applied for and were admitted to the Liberal Arts program. This accounts for the more recent dip from 96 to 61 students. It cannot, however, account for the major losses since Fall 2007. We expect that part of the Liberal Arts downward trend will reverse with the move to uncouple the major from the impaction limitations of the Teacher Preparation program, our recent renovations to the program that allow for maximum flexibility in lower division GE requirements as part of moving the major into the Humanities BA program (as a new Liberal Arts Concentration). These losses, however, speak to the dire need for marketing and recruitment efforts.

Although headcount enrollment declined 22% over the past five years, degrees awarded declined only by 19%. We attribute this to the push in 2010 to graduate students with high units and an increased emphasis on advising within the department to move students to graduation in a timely fashion.

During the time frame of this departmental self-study, our one-year retention rates for first time freshmen range from 69.8% to 86%. For transfer students, the range is 81.1% to 88.9%. The university rates for first time freshmen range from 77.3% to 87.1; for first time transfer students, the range is 81.1%-88.7%. No pattern emerges.

Also during the time frame of this departmental self-study, our six-year graduation rates for first time freshmen range from 39.6% to 59.1%. For transfer students, the range of three-year rates is 36.2% to
64.9%. The university rates for first time freshmen range from 42.2% to 51.4%. For transfer students, the range is 38.4% to 50.6%. With few fluctuations, the rates for Liberal Studies in both sets of students are declining.

8.4. Religious Studies BA Program

The data for the Religious Studies program in the Required Data Exhibits illustrates some of the systemic problems that motivated the change of Religious Studies from an independent B.A. program to a concentration within the Humanities major. One ever-present problem is that applicants are often unaware of Religious Studies, even to the point of being unclear on the scope and intent of such a program (for instance, assuming that one has to be religiously committed to take classes or major in the area). Another problem is that the shrinking number of full-time faculty over the period under review made aggressive and sustained recruitment efforts difficult. The result can be seen in the numbers of majors, which are so small that, for example, retention and graduation data analyzed here can hardly be said to rise to the level of statistical significance.

In Exhibit 5, the number of admitted applicants appears strong, but the enrollment rate is not strong, amounting to 14 of 131 (10.68%) over the five-year period 2007-11. It is unlikely that this has to do with a weakness in Religious Studies per se, since this is prior to their direct experience with the department and program. In other words, many applying students decide not to join Religious Studies after they are accepted, but before they make a final decision about which school and major to join.

Exhibits 6 and 7 make clear that there has been a drop in the number of students majoring in Religious Studies, such that the number of majors as of Fall 2011 is less than half of the Fall 2007 numbers (23 to 11). The data in Exhibit 6 shows that the number of majors grows annually as the cohorts move through, and inform their friends and fellow students about the high quality of instruction and attention in the Religious Studies program (each year’s senior class is either larger than, or equal to, the junior class from the previous year). However, the overall reduction in majors is undeniable, and was part of the rationale for folding Religious Studies into the Humanities major. On a side note, Religious Studies may well be disproportionately affected by the ban on Post Baccalaureate degrees, since an intensive comparative study of the meaning of life often appeals to returning students. Exhibit 8 indicates that the number of students reaching graduation has also been decreasing over the five years; it also reveals a significant gap between the number of seniors in the major and the number of graduates each year. The program coordinator will investigate the causes of this gap. (Possible causes include students going on health leave and students not coming in for advising.) In any case, the situation will change with the new major configuration described elsewhere in this report. In the future tracking students in the Religious Studies Concentration—to understand why some students become seniors but do not graduate and why some students avoid being advised—will be a top priority for the program coordinator.

Exhibit 9, “1st Year Retention Analysis: First-Time Freshman,” demonstrates the structural problem outlined above. Freshmen applicants are often unaware of Religious Studies; therefore, the their numbers are not statistically significant (ranging between one and three entering Freshmen each Fall between 2000 and 2010). While drawing conclusions from this small data set would be risky, 67%
(12 of 18) of the students who entered as Religious Studies majors were retained. The graduation analysis in Exhibit 10 (which has two reports within it: “6th Year Graduation Analysis: First-Time Freshman” and “3rd Year Graduation Analysis: New Undergrad Transfer”), albeit based on a small data set, reflects what was seen in Exhibit 8, namely, a decrease in the number of graduates during 2007-11.

Overall, these Required Data Elements suggest that the decision to change Religious Studies from independent BA program status to a concentration of the Humanities major was a sensible and timely one, which will strengthen advising, aid the development of a larger and more varied student cohort, and still enable students to get the academic benefits of a Religious Studies degree.

9. Summary

Having engaged in the current planning process, on the heels of efforts to revise the BA programs in Creative Arts and Humanities, faculty and staff in the Humanities Department are primed to serve students in improved ways. The department aims to enhance its ability to prepare students to have fulfilling careers, sometimes after also completing graduate school, and to become engaged citizens. In addition to serving our students, individual Humanities faculty continue to perform an exemplary amount of university service, while remaining active in various regional and national scholarly organizations.

Beyond aiming to improve in the areas just mentioned, it is also our goal to create an enhanced sense of community among, for example, Humanities majors who in the past would have been in separate BA programs in Humanities, Liberal Arts, and Religious Studies. We hope that, in the future, this group will be more like the currently cohesive group of Creative Arts majors or the learning communities formed by students in our team-taught GE programs: the American Civilization Program (AMS 1AB) and Humanities Honors Program (Hum 1AB/2AB). For this purpose, we plan to sponsor more departmental events for students and faculty.

A major challenge will be to garner the human and financial resources needed to recruit additional majors and plan additional events at a time when we lack the resources we need for day-to-day operations. We lost a half-time clerical position in July 2010 and, after having it back briefly this past year, lost it again. This situation has just worsened with the University’s sweeping of departmental CERF funds, which we use, in large part, to hire student assistants to perform basic operational tasks.

Perhaps even more detrimental to the long-term viability of the department has been the loss of faculty (due to retirements, for example). The University is aware of this situation and was considering a request to recruit from the department. However, like almost all other such requests, it is now frozen. Thus, moving forward, our greatest challenge will be to renew the ranks of the department’s regular (probationary and tenured) faculty. The realization of all our other goals depends on our ability to face this challenge.