Colorado State University- Pueblo Academic Program Assessment Report for AY 2013 14   Due: June 2, 2014
Program: Homeland Securjty Studjes !Certjficatel   Date: 5/15/2014
Completed by: steven Liebel PhD <Proaram Director\
Assessment contributors (other faculty involved in this program's assessment}: John O'Connor PhD

Please complete this form for each undergraduate minor certificate and araduate program (e.g., B.A., B.S., M.S.) in your department. Please copy any addenda (e.g., rubrics} and paste them in this document, and return it to Erin Frew, erin.frew@colostate pueblo.edu as an email attachment before June 2, 2014. You'll also find the form at the assessment website at http://www.colostate pueblo.edu/Assessment/Resources/Pages/default.aspx. Thank you.

Please describe the 2013-2014 assessment activities for the program in Part I. Use Column H to describe improvements planned for 2014-2015 based on the assessment process. In Part II, please describe activities engaged in during 2013-2014 designed to close-the-loop (improve the program) based on assessment activities and the information gathered in 2012-2013. Thank you

I. Program student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessed in this cycle, processes, results, and recommendations.

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle?	B. When was this SLO last assessed?	C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? (Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process)	D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved.	E. What is the expected achievement level and how many or what proportion of students should be at it?	F. What were the results of the assessment?	G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?	H. What changes/improvements to the JI[Q.9.[S!.m are planned based on this assessment?
1. Communication 2. Writing From the SLO statement: Communication: *"Students will be able to construct, compose, and deliver professional reports, research, and briefings."* Writing: *"Students will be able to construct and present col7erent, objective, and well reasoned arguments or discussions pertaining to topics on homeland*	Communication was assessed in the 2012-13 academic year. Spring semester 2013. 2013-14 is the first year Writing is to be assessed.	Communication: The program director observed and evaluated in-class presentations of student research on terrorist organizations. Evaluations were performed tal(ing into account feedback students were provided prior to presentations on content, technique, and presentation materials. See communication rubric attached at end of document. Writing: The program director and Philosophy faculty used a common rubric	18 students from the Spring term 200 level Terrorism course were sampled. 18 students constitutes every student in the course.	As per the programs assessment plan, 80% of students should perform at or above "proficient" for each SLO. With 18 students in the assessment pool, 15 should achieve at or above proficiency.	12 of 18 students met the expectation of proficiency for communication, and 13 of 18 met the expectation of proficiency for writing.	Communication: Strengths- Students display ability to digest feedback from professor and incorporate it into presentation tools. Students also displayed knowledge in post-presentation question session. Weaknesses – Students failed to dress appropriately, and occasionally displayed trepidation during presentations, causing lack of focus Writing: Strengths- Students display an ability to	The program must do several things. First, emphasize the development between logic and action. While students are able to do quality research, the theoretical argument between choice of action and expected outcome must be further developed. This theoretical link plays into justifications for both terrorism and counter-terrorism. Currently students appear to be lagging in this area. Additional time in class focused on theoretical exercises and puzzles will assist students in this area. Second, the program is considering

security."		to evaluate papers from the Terrorism class. See writing rubric attached at end of document.				amass significant volumes of relevant evidence based research and distill it to critical points/facts. They also display an ability to do quality background research. Weal<nesses – First, students face difficulty in basic writing skills such as organization and grammar. Second face difficulty developing theoretical connections between what an actor is doing and the justification for said action.	collaborating with university resources to assist students in development of writing skills. Third, the program wlll emphasize the professional nature of the program, and further socialize our students. This will be done by outlining expectations more clearly to the students both in the syllabus and in class. There will perhaps be a component of the presentation grade tied to attire and decorum.

Comments:

Communication:

To meet the expectation of 80% proficiency, 15 of 18 students must attain said level. Upon assessing all students according to the same communication rubric, 12 achieved proficiency. This is below the necessary level. Contributing to this level are several circumstances: one student failed to attend class the day of presentation and thus failed the assessment entirely; four students failed to achieve proficiency in "delivery" given inappropriate aHire/pace/voice volume; and three students were not proficient during the question and answer period, thereby reflecting poor aggregate knowledge of their materiaL

Numerous remedies to the presiding issues can be applied in class First, student presentations are a necessary component of the students semester grade, accounting for 10% of said grade. This fact is made clear on introduction of the syllabus and throughout the semester. The instructor can do little more to make students come to class aside from tying it to grades and providing a positive environment in which to discuss material. The presentation could perhaps be a larger component of the students grade, so as to further emphasize its importance. Second, student attire was addressed in class as a necessary component of a professional presentation, but is not currently required within the syllabus. Further, the level of emphasis on this specific component of a presentation was perhaps not as strenuous as it could be. That four students failed to present professionally dictates that changes be made so as to socialize the students more appropriately and/or be compelled to present professionally. This requirement will be tied to the students presentation grade and be included in the syllabus.

Writing:

To meet the expectation of 80% proficiency, 15 of 18 students must attain said level. Upon assessing all students according to the same writing rubric, 13 achieved proficiency. This is below the necessary level. Contributing to this level are several circumstances: three students failed to incorporate all required areas of research, as defined by the syllabus, within their paper; four students failed to adequately organize their paper; and three students failed to make adequate connections between conceptsftheories and goals of groups.

There are remedies to these issues that can be applied in class. First,instructions pertaining to required components can be clarified and emphasized both within the syllabus and in class. They are already present, but further clarity could help alleviate the problem. Second, as the primary noticeable issue within papers, organization can be further emphasized. Currently, the students turn in their research paper in multiple stages throughout the semester, at each point receiving typed feedbacl< from the instructor. Because organizational

issues are something every student should confront as a necessary component of developing basic skills, organization will hold a higher place within the feedback students receive. Third, as the area of concern that emphasizes higher level thinking, drawing connections between why groups/organizations do what they do and the theories presented in class is a critical area in need of emphasis. Because the class is theoretical in nature, examples illustrating the relationship will be incorporated and additional time will be spent on developing an understanding between cause and effect.

II. Follow--up (closing the loop) on results and activities from previous assessment cycles. In this section, please describe actions taken during this cycle that were based on, or implemented to address, the results of assessment from previous cycles.

A. What SLO(s) did you address? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.	B. When was this SLO last assessed?	C. What were the recommendations for change from the previous assessment?	D. Were the recommendations for change acted upon? If not, why?	E. What were the results of the changes? If the changes were not effective, what are the next steps or the new recommendations?
1. Communication 2. Writing From the SLO statement: Communication: *"Students will be able to construct, compose, and deliver professional reports, research, and briefings."* Writing: *"Students will be able to construct and present coherent, objective, and well reasoned arguments or discussions pertaining to topics on homeland security."*	Communication was assessed in the 2012-13 academic year. Spring semester 2013. 2013-14 is the first year Writing is to be assessed.	The 2012-13 assessment called for: increased presentation time for individual students; a larger non-random sample of students; and more than one SOL to be assessed per year.	Yes, the recommendations were acted upon. To incorporate the 2012-13 feedback, every student within the terrorism class participated in the exercise and assessment. Student research briefings had their presentation time increased, and the program now assesses writing and communication SLOs every year.	Every student was included in the sample. This decision incorporates information on each individual student, and is useful for assessment purposes, but does not produce an immediate change in student performance. While the random sampling technique performed in 2012-13 displayed statistical correlation between the smaller group assessed sample and the larger individually assessed sample, the primary difference on the front end is concrete knowledge on every student. On the bacl< end, individualized information fits well with the new portfolio tracking approach implemented by the program in 2013-14. Every student was given more time to present their research. Students were thus able to go into more detail about their research. This allows students to more fully express the components of their group and to delve into the intricacies of said group. The addition of and additional SLO provides more information on student development as they progress through the program, This is useful for assessment purposes,

				and similarly to the increase in sample size, benefits assessment as opposed to immediate student development. This addition will likely assist with identifying areas of concern for students progressing on to the more advanced 300 level courses, and will likely be useful as a lot}9:term developmental tool.

Comments:

Communication:

Notes on incorporated recommendations:

Two recommendations made concerning the 2012-13 communication assessment were incorporated. The first recommendation was to increase the sample size of students included in the assessment. The 2012-13 assessment was performed utilizing a random sampling technique. Of a class of 20 students, five students were assessed by both the program director and two faculty members from the department of political science. The students had volunteered to present on a given day and were unaware they would be assessed. The program director then assessed the remaining 15 students in the absence of additional faculty, and correlated scores from the two samples to validate the scoring methods between them. Justification for this approach was related to time constraints, these additional faculty could not sit through four days of presentations (20 students, five students presenting per day), and instead were available for only one (five students), and further, the random sample was shown to be highly correlated to the larger class sample, indicating that there was little to no bias in scoring. However, while the reviewer did not provided justification for requesting a larger sample, it can be assumed that there were concerns with skewness or bias in the outcome given that there were no points of validation for the non-peer reviewed portion of the sample. To accommodate these concerns, the updated sample includes the entirety of the class being assessed in a uniform fashion. This should prevent concerns about possible outliers not being included as discreet data points, and allows the assessment to capture potential problems wholesale by scoring all students individually.

While sampling the entire class does provide added clarity, there are two possible negatives to requiring the assessment of all students in a uniform manner. First, it prevents the inclusion of external faculty participating in the process. Faculty cannot be present for multiple class sessions given their own schedules and commitments. Second, because the random sample of 2012-13 was highly correlated to the remainder of the class, thus providing evidence that the method was functional (i.e. the scores provided by external observers were equivalent to those taken by the program director alone), it is difficult to discern the advantages of including the entire class in the sample, especially when it means there is limited external participation in the observation process.

The second recommendation was to allow students more time to present their research. To accommodate this recommendation student presentation time was increased from 7 to 8 minutes. This is the maximum allowable time given restraints pertaining to the number of students in the class and the amount of time available given a set number of class periods. To increase this further would necessitate the removal of critical theoretical material coverage and would cut directly into the question and answer sessions following each presentation.

Notes on student performance given changes in course practice:

Notably, an area where all students achieved proficiency or better in 2013-14 was in "presentation tools." This is reflective of a change noted within the 2012-13 assessment in which the program director determined that students required more advanced feedback on presentation materials prior to time of presentation. Thus, students are now advised individually on content and material prior to their presentation. This is accomplished by first giving students extensive feedback on their research paper (done prior to 2012-13 assessment), and second, by requiring students to provide presentation materials (e.g., slides, handouts) to the professor for feedback at least 72 hours prior to the presentation (now done in addition to research paper feedback). As a result of adding the new component of material feedback, students presentations were better organized, more succinctly, and tended to both stay on target and within the required time frame. This change will continue in future courses.

Writing:

The third change made upon recommendation was the incorporation of an additional SLO per year. Writing was chosen to accommodate Communication for the Certificate SLO assessment given their usefulness is determining base skills. Thus, 2013 14 is the first year the Writing SLO was assessed. There have been no changes given the absence of prior year feedback.

Homeland Security Studies Certificate
Colorado State University--Pueblo
Communication Rubric

Intended student learning outcome assessed with this rubric:

Students will be able to construct, compose, *and deliver professional reports, research, and briefings.*

Student work assessed:

Research presentation/briefing

Communication	Exemplary:	Proficient:	Emerging:	Not Present:
A. Delivery	Delivery is *dynamic,* utilizing *varied* tone, volume, pace, and body language in support of argument(s). Attire *enhances* **environment.**	Delivery is *clear,* utilizing *appropriate* tone, volume, pace, and body language in support of argument(s). Attire *supports* **environment.**	Delivery is audible, utilizing *flat* or *non-varied* tone, **volume, pace,** and body language in support of argument(s). Attire *detracts* from **environment.**	
B. Presentation Tools	Presentation tools are *logical,* utilizing *clear* **sequences** and transitions. Visual aids are *error-free* and *enhance* presentation **environment.**	Presentation tools are *mostly logical* and *generally* utilize clear sequences and transitions. Visual aids are *generally error-free* and *support* the presentation **environment.**	Presentation tools are *occasionally logical* and may utilize *confusing* sequences and transitions. Visual **aids are *error-prone* and** *detract* from the presentation environment.	
C. Question and Answer Period	Provides a *thorough* justification of conclusions, *clearly* explains rationales and assumptions.	Provides a justification of conclusions, explains rationales and assumptions.	Conclusions are not clearly justified, and/or assumptions are not explained.	

Homeland Security Studies Certificate
Colorado State University--Pueblo
Writing Rubric

Intended student learning outcome assessed with this rubric:
Students will be able to construct and present coherent, objective, and well reasoned arguments or discussions pertaining to topics on homeland security

Student work assessed:
Research paper from student portfolio

Critical Thinking	Exemplary:	Proficient:	Emerging:	Not Present:
A. Application of **Evidence,** Concepts, Theories	Evidence, concepts, and theories, incorporated are *relevant,* and *clearly* articulated	Evidence, concepts, and **theories are** incorporated	Evidence, concepts, and theories are incorporated on a *limited* basis, and are only *occasionally* relevant	
B. Quality of Reasoning	Connections drawn between evidence, concepts, theories, **and conclusions are** *clearly* explained and *fully* evaluated	Connections drawn between evidence, **concepts, theories, and conclusions** are explained and evaluated	**Connections** drawn between **evidence,** concepts, theories, and conclusions are *occasionally* explained and evaluated, potentially incorrectly	
C. Exposition and style	Document is *well* organized, *clearly* structured, and *free* of spelling and grammatical errors. Organization *contributes* to readability.	Document **organization is** *coherent,* with occasional spelling and grammatical **errors.** Organization neither contributes nor detracts from readability.	Document organization is *opaque* with frequent spelling and grammatical issues. Organization detracts from readability.	