

**Colorado State University – Pueblo Academic Program Assessment Report for AY 2014-2015**

**Due: June 1, 2015**

**Program:** \_\_\_\_\_ University Honors Program (minor) \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_ May 29, 2015 \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ John O'Connor \_

**Assessment contributors (other faculty involved in this program's assessment):** \_\_\_ Derek Lopez \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form for each undergraduate, minor, certificate, and graduate 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 submit it to the dean of your college/school as per the deadline established. The dean will forward it to me 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/ResultsAndReports/Pages/default.aspx>.

Please describe the 2014-2015 assessment activities for the program in Part I. Use Column H to describe improvements planned for 2015-2016 based on the assessment process. In Part II, please describe activities engaged in during 2014-2015 designed to close-the-loop (improve the program) based on assessment activities and the information gathered in 2013-2014. 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>Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.</b>	B. When was this SLO last assessed? <b>Please indicate the semester and year.</b>	C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? <b>Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.</b>	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 <u>program</u> are planned based on this assessment?
<b>SLO #1: Critical Thinking.**</b> Students will be able to formulate and develop	Prior to AY14-15, this SLO had not yet been assessed on	Senior theses were evaluated with the attached rubric. The rubric	The theses of all University Honors Program graduating	Each student should perform at a 'proficient' or higher (i.e.	Assessment revealed that students met expectations. That is, 100%	The students performed very well on their theses in general and with respect to this SLO in	Written communication will be improved and the current expectations for meetings and interim progress will be articulated more precisely.

arguments with sufficient support—including reasoning, evidence & persuasive appeals—and proper attribution as needed.	its own. In 2013 it was included in the year-end assessment using “preliminary methods ... across the SLOs [that] were developed on a course by course basis.” (UHP Assessment Report comments, 2013)	broke ‘Critical Thinking’ into four distinct categories and evaluated each separately.	seniors (n=10) were assessed.	‘exemplary’) level in each category of this SLO. That is, 100% of UHP graduates are expected to be proficient in critical thinking as measured by the rubric.	of our graduating Honors students were ‘proficient’ or ‘exemplary’ in this SLO.	particular. However, the results do suggest that aspects of the thesis process itself could be improved. This is particularly true concerning consistent communication of expectations among all parties: student, major program mentor & honors program director.	Also, the timeline for students engaged in thesis writing will be more clearly enforced so as to facilitate regular iterations of research.
<b>SLO #3: Independent Research, Creativity, and Scholarship.**</b> Students will be able to apply discipline-specific as well as cross-discipline-based knowledge to design, execute and report on a particular problem-solving strategy.	Prior to AY14-15, this SLO had not yet been assessed on its own. In 2013 it was included in the year-end assessment using “preliminary methods ... across the SLOs [that] were developed on a course by course basis.” (UHP Assessment Report	Senior theses were evaluated with the attached rubric.	The theses of all University Honors Program graduating seniors (n=10) were assessed.	Each student should perform at a ‘proficient’ or higher (i.e. ‘exemplary’) level in this SLO. That is, 100% of UHP graduates are expected to be proficient in producing independent scholarship / creative works as measured by the rubric.	Assessment revealed that students met expectations. That is, 100% of our graduating Honors students were ‘proficient’ / ‘exemplary’ in this SLO.	The students performed very well but this SLO’s language and the current thesis process made it difficult to assess with more precision than the two-valued rubric allows.	This SLO’s language will be revised, the interim evaluation process for thesis work will be changed, or both.

	comments, 2013)						
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Comments:

**\*\* NB:** the UHP assessment plan on the Assessment website is not the current plan, and it does not reflect the SLO language as it appears in the college catalog. The current plan is dated May 2013. Although this 2013 plan will be revised before the next assessment cycle, it is being submitted with this document for reference. Note also that the SLO numbering in the attached 2013 plan is inconsistent with the order of SLOs as they appear in the catalog. This assessment report and the associated rubrics number the SLOs according to the college catalog.

**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? Please indicate the semester and year.	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?
N/A. Please see comments below.	N/A. Please see comments below.	One major concern expressed in the peer reports was the discrepancy between stated SLOs and the tools for assessment.	Yes. This year's assessment tools adhered as strictly as was practicable to the language of the SLOs being assessed.	These changes revealed the limits of the current assessment plan, especially in the articulation of its SLOs. Next steps include large-scale revision of the assessment plan. Please see comments below.

Comments:

As this is only the second year of assessing UHP SLOs individually I have not 'closed the loop' *per se* on any specific SLO from previous assessment cycles. One major concern expressed in the peer reports was the discrepancy between stated SLOs and the tools for assessment. I was able to address that element this year (see above). However, previous years' reviewer comments reveal that the UHP assessment plan and process needs significant revision; I agree. Thus, instead of an *ad hoc* attempt to close the loop on SLO #2 (the only SLO to have been isolated and assessed prior to this year) I

am working to respond to previous years' critiques by overhauling the assessment plan. The new plan will include the following: revised SLO language; an updated curriculum map; consistent alignment of assessment needs with course materials and assignments; and an assessment cycle schedule that allows rotating SLO assessment while monitoring cohort progress through the program and toward acquiring the skills necessary for writing senior theses. In sum, this year's assessment follow-up stage resisted *ad hoc* modifications in anticipation of large-scale revisions.

Honors Minor  
Colorado State University-Pueblo  
Critical Thinking & Independent Research Rubric

Intended learning outcomes assessed with this instrument:

- **SLO #1: Critical Thinking.** Students will be able to formulate and develop arguments with sufficient support—including reasoning, evidence & persuasive appeals—and proper attribution as needed.
- **SLO #3: Independent Research, Creativity, and Scholarship.** Students will be able to apply discipline-specific as well as cross-discipline-based knowledge to design, execute and report on a particular problem-solving strategy.

Student work assessed: Senior thesis

	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Not Present</b>
<b>Formulation of argument</b> (SLO #1)	Argument & conclusion(s) are <i>explicit, precisely articulated, and clear</i> .	Argument & conclusion(s) are <i>explicit</i> .	Argument & conclusion(s) are <i>implied</i> and/or <i>unsophisticated</i> .	
<b>Quality of reasoning in support of conclusion(s)</b> (SLO #1)	Reasoning is <i>good</i> (i.e. strong or valid) and <i>well-explained</i> .	Reasoning is <i>generally good</i> (i.e. strong or valid).	Reasoning is <i>not generally good</i> (i.e. work is characterized by <i>weak</i> reasoning).	
<b>Use of evidence in support of conclusion(s)</b> (SLO #1)	Conclusions are supported with <i>appropriate, sufficient, and well-explained</i> evidence (e.g. textual, experimental or observational evidence).	Conclusions are supported with <i>appropriate</i> & generally <i>sufficient</i> evidence (e.g. textual, experimental or observational evidence).	Evidentiary support for conclusions is limited.	
<b>Use of attribution</b> (SLO #1. Formatting and standards understood to vary by discipline)	Standards of proper attribution are applied <i>consistently throughout</i> .	Standards of attribution are followed, but may be applied with <i>some inconsistency</i> .	Attempts at attribution are present, but are <i>too inconsistent or partial</i> .	

	<b>Exemplary/ Proficient</b>	<b>Emerging / Not Present</b>
<b>Independent Research / creativity / scholarship</b> (SLO #3)	Thesis applies knowledge & involves a report of student-designed / executed problem-solving strategy.	Thesis does not apply knowledge or it does not involve a report of student-designed / executed problem-solving strategy.