

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Homeland Security GSI Certificate Program

College: Arts and Sciences

Prepared by: Dr. Mark Melder / Mr. Frank Hall

Date: 12 June 2017

Approved by: Greg Handel, Dean

Date: June 16, 2017

Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. *Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.*

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission. The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

Department of Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences. The Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences Department at Northwestern State University is dedicated to the development of students for roles in academic, leadership, professional, and research careers in the challenging fields of criminal justice, history, public safety, law, and public service. Utilizing transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research and service the department produces graduates equipped to be productive members of society and a driving force in the economic development and improvement of the overall quality of life in the region. The department delivers Bachelor of Arts degrees in Criminal Justice and History and Bachelors of Science degrees in Unified Public Safety Administration with concentrations in Law Enforcement Administration, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services Administration, Emergency Management Administration, and Public Facilities Management. Certificate programs in Pre-Law and Paralegal Studies and Public Policy and Administration are also available

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

in addition to a Pre-law and Paralegal Studies concentration and minor. The department also delivers a Master's of Science degree in Homeland Security, and a Post-Master's Certificate in Global Security and Intelligence.

Homeland Security Program Mission Statement: From the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to the current National Security Strategy, students will gain a distinct appreciation for the complexities of homeland security organizations, leadership, policies, ethics, and challenges, through the review of pertinent literature, critical thinking, research, and reflective analysis and evaluation. The Master's Degree in Homeland Security is unique in that it pushes students to develop plausible solutions to the inexorable national, international, and transnational, threats currently challenging global security through the innovative delivery of transformative student learning experiences which prepare our graduates for life and career success in this ever growing occupational field.

Global Security Intelligence Certificate Mission Statement:

Northwestern State University's Post Graduate Certificate in Global Security and Intelligence (GSI) is a comprehensive program designed to enhance the education obtained at the Graduate level. The Certification program is designed to build on the background achieved at the graduate level and capitalize on the work experience of the student.

All classes involve the mandated development and mastering of analytical thinking, problem-solving, questions of rationality, and a broad understanding of challenging, fundamental and advanced, homeland security and program issues, ultimately applied to real world scenarios.

Purpose: The purpose of the GSI Post-Master's Certificate is to provide advanced credentialing options to Master's trained students and enhance their knowledge-base in a field specific manner.

Methodology: The assessment process for the GSI program is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected and returned to the program coordinator;
- (2) The program coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the program faculty;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with faculty teaching core graduate courses if required (show cause);

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

(5) The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the HS Advisory Committee, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, curricula and program changes.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. First semester students will be able to describe the historical evolution of terrorism and specific changes to methods and targets based upon the most recent advances in technology.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

GSI 6000: Terrorism in the 21st Century

Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge)

On an annual basis, students enrolled in GSI 6000, a required course for GSI certificate students, will be administered their initial course exam containing a module of questions taken from a bank developed by a faculty committee and designed to evaluate the student's knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of terrorism in the 21st century. Specifically "how terrorism is different in the 21st century - in what ways are terrorism and terrorists changing to reflect changes in technology to include communication and travel?" 75% of enrolled students will be able to describe a basic understanding by scoring 70% or higher on the exam.

Findings GSI 6000 target met 100% of student scored 70% or higher on exam

Analysis In GSI 6000 all of the students were able to score above the target score on their initial exam, the average was 98%.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

Students will demonstrate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills through a scenario-driven exercise in which they are required to analyze and develop a response to a homeland security situation. In this response, they must create a plan that contains relevant, justifiable, feasible, and actionable recommendations based on the information presented. 70% of the students will score 8 or higher on the *Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric* (attached).

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Findings. GSI 6000 target met 100% of student scored 8 or higher on rubric

Analysis. Although the target for the measure was met both in regard to rubric score and number of students achieving the target score, insufficient data due to a small population ($N=3$) makes detailed analysis difficult. The post-master's nature of the program also may have an effect on scores.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Measure 1.3. (Direct – knowledge)

At the end of each semester, students enrolled in GSI 6000, a required courses for GSI certificate students, will be administered their final course exam containing a module of questions taken from a bank developed by a faculty committee and designed to evaluate the student's knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of terrorism in the 21st century. Specifically "how terrorism is different in the 21st century - in what ways are terrorism and terrorists changing to reflect changes in technology to include communication and travel?" 90% of enrolled students will demonstrate a fundamental knowledge by scoring 90% or higher on the exam.

Findings. GSI 6000 target met 100% of student scored 90% or higher on the exam

Analysis. As discussed above, although the target for the measure was met both in regard to exam score and number of students achieving the target exam score, insufficient data due to a small population ($N=3$) makes detailed analysis difficult. The post-master's nature of the program also may have an effect on scores.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

SLO 2. Third-semester students will successfully design a project to address all levels of their particular final scenario. Success will be measured by the extent to which the student includes the objectives of appropriate leadership structure; addressing moral and ethical issues that relate to the scenario; staffing of the project utilizing the five factors of personality and the big eight theory of competencies; and, the optimum collaboration model to achieve their goals as dictated by the scenario.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

GSI 6010: Organizational Leadership

GSI 6020: Philosophy of Ethics

GSI 6040: Industrial-Organizational Psychology

GSI 6050: Policy and Governance in Multi-agency Collaboration

Measure: 2.1. (Direct – knowledge)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from the required courses above will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using a standardized *research paper rubric* (attached). The papers and/or projects will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of leadership theory, ethical and moral philosophy, industrial-organizational psychology and multi-agency collaboration practices. At least 80% of students sampled will score 75% or higher on the evaluation.

Findings. GSI 6010; 6020; 6040 Target met 100% of students achieved 75% or higher on evaluation. **GSI 6050** was not taught AY 2016-17

Analysis. As mentioned above, the small number of enrollees in this program for AY 2016-17 ($N=5$) preclude sampling as planned and the paucity of data makes analysis difficult at best. All students achieved the target scores, but again, the post-master's nature of the participants may serve to confound our findings.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Measure: 2.2. (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of each semester, the program will sample students with a survey, which will state: "In my Global Security Intelligence courses I was provided a masters level of understanding of leadership theory, ethical and moral philosophy, industrial-organizational psychology and multi-agency collaboration practices." Respondents will be able to respond with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. At least 85% of students will respond that they strongly agree or agree with the statement.

Findings. Target met – at least 85% of respondents agree with statements.

Analysis. Student responses to questions are consistently positive when queried about what they are learning and the applicability of the knowledge to their particular field. The data gathered to date has come from student feedback and questions included in the end of semester exercises.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Decision. As part of our continuous improvement model, a formal survey instrument is under revision based on feedback received from students and will be deployed beginning in Fall 2017. We will continue the process of rolling out our new survey and modify content as we gather data.

SLO 3. Third semester students will demonstrate mastery of methodological concepts through the selection and application of the optimum research design to address questions that arise in concert with the scenario that comprises their final project.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

GSI 6030: Research Methods and Methodology

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

Students will demonstrate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills through selecting the optimal methodology to address a scenario-driven exercise in which they are required to analyze and develop a response to a homeland security situation. In this response, they must create a plan that contains relevant, justifiable, feasible, and actionable recommendations based on the information presented. 70% of the students will score 8 or higher on the *Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric* (attached).

Findings GSI 6030 target met 100% of student scored 8 or higher on rubric

Analysis. Although the target for the measure was met both in regard to rubric score and number of students achieving the target score, insufficient data due to a small population ($N=3$) makes detailed analysis difficult. The post-master's nature of the program also may have an effect on scores.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Measure 3.2. (Indirect – Knowledge / Attitude)

At the end of the fourth semester, the department will sample students with a *performance survey*. One question on this survey will state: "The Global Security and Intelligence Certificate program at NSU has enhanced my ability to conduct risk assessments, implement mitigations measures, navigate leadership, philosophical and staffing challenges, and know the foundational challenges raised by terrorism in the 21st

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

century. " Respondents will be able to respond with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. At least 85% of students will respond that they agree or strongly agree with the statement.

An online *survey* will be sent to a convenience sample of community partners who employ Global Security and Intelligence Certificate program students, asking them the degree to which they agree with the statement, "NSU HS GSI Certificate holders hired by you are able to conduct risk assessments, implement mitigations measures, navigate leadership, philosophical and staffing challenges, and know the foundational challenges raised by terrorism in the 21st century.." Response choices will be, "strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree." At least 85% of community partners who will agree or strongly agree with that statement.

At the end of the fourth semester, the department will sample students with a *performance survey*. One question on this survey will state: "The Global Security and Intelligence Certificate program at NSU has enabled me to conduct risk assessments, implement mitigations measures, navigate leadership challenges, and know the foundational concepts of the all-hazards approach to the emergency management process." Respondents will be able to respond with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. At least 85% of students will respond that they agree or strongly agree with the statement.

An online *survey* will be sent to a convenience sample of community partners who employ The Global Security and Intelligence Certificate program students, asking them the degree to which they agree with the statement, "NSU HS graduates hired by you are able to recognize and articulate the foundational assumptions, central ideas and dominant criticisms of Homeland Security programs, strategies, and theories." Response choices will be, "strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree." At least 85% of community partners who will agree or strongly agree with that statement.

Findings. Target met - at least 85% of respondents agree with statements.

Analysis. Community partner responses to questions are consistently positive when asked about the knowledge base of graduates hired. The data gathered to date has largely come from informal interactions with these partners.

Decision. As part of our continuous improvement model, a formal survey instrument is being constructed based upon feedback received from community partners and will be deployed beginning in Fall 2017. We will continue the process of rolling out our new survey and modify content as we gather data.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Measure 3.3. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

Two or more faculty members will review position paper submissions by students using *Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric* (attached), in which they are required to analyze and respond to some aspect of Homeland Security, Policy, Strategy, Philosophy or Leadership. The paper is intended to allow the student to demonstrate the capacity to critically analyze information in an objective manner and engage in the development, assessment, determination, compilation, and selection of a potential solution which best supports their position. At least 85% of projects, papers, and presentations evaluated will score 85% or higher.

Findings GSI 6030 target met, 90% of presentations scored 85% or higher

Analysis. All projects were successful in their achievement of targets and employing the ideas and practices delivered in the 6030 course, taking the mixed methods research designs and applying them to their unique, individual projects. These projects range from HR situations at state agencies to interagency cooperation with local law enforcement bodies in the event of terror attacks or natural disasters. This project-based orientation has been very popular with the students and has produced excellent work.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

SLO 4. Students will demonstrate appropriate communication skills.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

GSI 6010: Organizational Leadership

GSI 6020: Philosophy of Ethics

GSI 6030: Research Methods and Methodology

GSI 6040: Industrial-Organizational Psychology

GSI 6050: Policy and Governance in Multi-agency Collaboration

Measure 4.1. (Direct - Skill)

Eighty percent (80%) of students will demonstrate proficient written communication skills. Student research papers will be used to evaluate their written communication skills by rating the quality of the writing on the *Research Paper Rubric* (see attachment). Numerous components will measure written communications skills on a scale from low proficiency to high proficiency. Proficiency will be demonstrated by a combined score of at least 94 on sections 1-4, 7 - 9, and 11 of the rubric.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Findings. GSI 6010; 6020; 6040 Target met 100% of students achieved 94 or higher on evaluation. GSI 6050 was not taught AY 2016-17

Analysis. As mentioned above, the small number of enrollees in this program for AY 2016-17 ($N=5$) preclude sampling as planned and the paucity of data makes analysis difficult at best. All students achieved the target scores, but again, the post-master's nature of the participants may serve to confound our findings.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Measure 4.2. (Direct - Knowledge)

Eighty percent (80%) of graduates will demonstrate proficiency in oral communication skills. Course presentations will be used to evaluate students' oral communication skills by rating the quality of the presentations on *Thesis – Non-Thesis Assessment Rubric* (see attachment). Sections 1-4, 7 - 9, and 11 of the rubric will also measure oral communication skills on a scale of low proficiency to high proficiency. Proficiency will be demonstrated by a combined score of at least 94 on sections 1-4, 7 - 9, and 11 of the rubric.

Findings GSI 6010; 6020; 6040 Target met 100% of students achieved 94 or higher on evaluation. GSI 6050 was not taught AY 2016-17

Analysis. As mentioned above, the small number of enrollees in this program for AY 2016-17 ($N=5$) preclude sampling as planned and the paucity of data makes analysis difficult at best. All students achieved the target scores, but again, the post-master's nature of the participants may serve to confound our findings.

Decision. At this time there is no change required in the outcome, measure or target. It is clear learning is taking place and while there is room for improvement the faculty support at least another year of data collection before making any substantive changes.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

A comprehensive summary of key findings and decisions.

For the 2016-2017 academic year, the Global Security and Intelligence Certificate Program assessment committee examined 10 measures for four Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and the findings are as follows. The targets for all ten of the measures were met. All measures and targets will remain in their current form pending the outcome of our 2017-18 assessment

We are excited that the program-wide changes that have taken place in the previous three years, in personnel, curricula, and procedures appear to have had positive effects on student learning. Courses have been, and continue to be, redesigned and updated and the methods of delivery of instruction have been revamped.

We know through informal and formal student feedback that the courses are meeting their needs and piquing their curiosity and that learning is occurring. Positive responses from our stakeholders indicate that their needs are being addressed as well. We will be deploying our new surveys to the students and community partners in Fall 2017 and are eager to gather more data to allow us to move forward with program improvement to enhance the educational experiences for our students and ensure that they are meeting the needs of our community partners.

Our overall decision about measures and targets is to refrain from any changes at this time. Although the targets were met, and even exceeded, on all SLOs, we will not be making any changes this cycle. This decision is based on the knowledge learning is occurring and we recognize that we have insufficient data to make informed changes to our program. As a budding certificate program, our enrollments are in the building stage and we are hesitant to base modifications on a small population.