Comprehensive Standard

3.3.1   *The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas (Institutional Effectiveness):*

3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

The institution stated that it is transitioning regarding an operational strategic plan with an expected implementation date of December 2016. The institution provided assessment reports for the two prior academic years as evidence for this standard. The institution indicated that academic units are responsible for setting student learning outcomes and inputting into the Accreditation Management System. Additionally, a description was provided about what information is required for each assessment report. The institution provided a sampling of assessment reports from 2014-15 and 2015-16 but did not describe how the sample is reasonable and representative. Student learning outcomes were articulated; however, assessments rely heavily on course or project grades, which include extraneous components (e.g. writing mechanics), which do not speak to the specified student learning outcome. It was unclear to the Off-Site Reaffirmation Committee how these blunt measures provide useful and/or usable data upon which to make changes to improve the academic programs. The "Action is associated with the following Findings" portion of the assessment reports often indicated, "No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action." Evidence that results are used for continuous improvement was limited.

After a review of the Focused Report and supporting documentation, the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee finds the institution gives appropriate rationale for the sampling provided. In addition, the institution has named a Director of Institutional Effectiveness to demonstrate commitment to university-wide involvement and oversight with a multifaceted, systematic approach to measuring performance and a cyclical process for continuous improvement. However, the institution's institutional effectiveness model; which includes an IE policy, strategic plan, strategic planning, and budgeting process, and assessment process is new. Interviews with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources, and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee indicated that, while the institution had an assessment process in place prior to the implementation of the new Taskstream system, the process lacked uniformity and oversight in some areas. An examination of the evidence provided for the sample of the institution's academic programs for AY 2014-15 and 2015-16 demonstrated expected outcomes are identified; however, assessment of the articulated outcomes rely heavily on course and/or project grades that do not speak to directly to the student learning outcomes (SLO) identified.

The Committee determined that the new process, tools, and structure will assist the institution in systematically identifying outcomes, including student learning outcomes, assess the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results. However, the institution's process is immature and, therefore, the institution was unable to provide sufficient evidence that it assesses the articulated program outcomes and makes improvement based on those assessments.

Committee Recommendation 2: The Committee recommends that the institution provide evidence that it assesses the extent to which it achieves the articulated student learning outcomes, and provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results for each of its educational programs.

University Response:

Note: All supporting documents referenced in this response are located at https://www.nsula.edu/institutionaleffectiveness/ . In most cases, a link to each supporting document is located directly below the link to the narrative University response. Please download the response so that you can easily navigate between it and its supporting documents. The supporting documents are in numerical order in accordance with the sequence in which they appear in the response. If the documents referenced are located at another location on the institutional effectiveness website, they are listed by category name (i.e., STRATEGIC PLANNING); sub-category name (i.e., Strategic Communications); and the cited name of the reference (i.e., "1 - Dr. Henderson - Week of 2 February 2015").

Northwestern State University has established uniform processes for developing and assessing outcomes for its educational programs through its Strategic Plan and Institutional Effectiveness Model. These processes, with their attendant oversight structures, were refined as part of the development of the current strategic plan for 2016-21. In 2017, the University completed the most recent cycle of this Institution-Wide Assessment Process for all academic programs and administrative, student, and academic support units. This process provides evidence that the University assesses articulated program outcomes and makes improvements based on analysis of assessment results.

Strategic Planning

In January 2017, Northwestern State University transitioned from its Strategic Plan 2011-2018, *Go for Greatness* (#1: *NSU Strategic-Plan-2011 – 2018*, Jan 2011), to its current five-year plan, *Strategic Plan 2016-2021* (#2: *Strategic Plan 2016-2021*, 23 Jan 2016). This transition was the culmination of six academic years of ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that engaged the entire University community. In June 2017,

the University completed the first year of this assessment cycle (#3: *Assessment Cycle 2016 – 2017, Setting the Benchmark, 5 July 2017*), which contributed to the refinement of objectives that drive the process of continuous improvement of institutional quality and demonstrate that the University is effectively accomplishing its mission.

Strategic Plan 2016-2021 emphasizes five Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs): The Student Experience, Academic Excellence, Market Responsiveness, Athletic Prominence, and Community Enrichment. The Leadership Team, which includes faculty and student representation, determined that it was important to ascertain the University's status for each SFA.   The University completed the first phase of its strategic plan on June 15, 2017, as reported in the document, *Assessment Cycle 2016-2017, Setting the Benchmark*. This document identifies specific benchmarks, metrics, and targets for each SFA. The benchmarks establish a baseline for measuring continuous improvement in each annual assessment of the strategic plan, and the metrics describe how each SFA will measure change over the course of the strategic plan. For example, in the "Market Responsiveness" SFA, one metric concerns the "Number of departments that have active advisory councils" and includes a benchmark of 77% and a target of 100%. This process ensures the University is using a responsive, data-driven model to establish objectives and drive strategic planning and decision-making in support of its mission.

Institution-Wide Assessment Process

The University's current Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Model evolved from the systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes dating to the University's "*Go for Greatness 2011-2018*" strategic plan. The University's Institutional Effectiveness Policy codifies this model, which includes a uniform Institution-Wide Assessment Process for academic program student learning outcomes (SLOs) and administrative unit service outcomes (SOs). The Northwestern IE Model Timeline graphically reflects the integrated nature of the University's IE process. Please note the activities reflected on the timeline will apply to each upcoming academic year. (#4: *Institutional Effectiveness Policy* signed 27 January 2017 and #5: *IE Model laid out over time 4 May 2017).*

The Institution-Wide Assessment Process completed under this plan in 2016-17 engaged one-hundred and sixteen (116) academic programs and administrative units (See ASSESSMENT CYCLE AY 2016-2017 REPORTS). The document, *Assessment Cycle 2016 – 2017, Setting the Benchmark*, leverages the assessment results of the University's sixty-six (66) academic programs, twenty-six (26) administrative support services units, and twenty-four (24) academic and student support services units. These assessment reports provide evidence that the University's academic programs and administrative units have capitalized on their respective findings and analyses to make decisions and take actions that lead to improvement and mission

accomplishment. Examples are provided at the end of this document. Assessment plans for 2017-2018 incorporate these refinements.

The University took a deliberate approach to the structure of its assessment process particularly regarding the identification of outcome measures. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provided faculty and staff with a guide to assist in standardizing the development of academic program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Service Outcomes (SOs) *(See #6: Guide to Outcome - Measure Development 15 April 2017).*

According to the University's *Guide to Outcome – Measure Development*, SLOs should be specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and tied to a specific timeframe. Each outcome addresses knowledge, skills, attitudes, or dispositions. The policy (or model) also requires that outcome statements specify what students will know or be able to perform or demonstrate when they have completed or participated in the program, course, project, or activity.

As described in the University's *Guide to Outcome – Measure Development*, measures combine the assessment methodology and the target for the outcome. A direct measure, which is preferred, requires a student demonstrate the skill or knowledge. An indirect assessment measure addresses perception of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or dispositions. The University encourages setting targets that are difficult to attain so that there is a constant pursuit of improvement. As such, Northwestern does not rely solely on course grades as an acceptable measure for the assessment of an outcome.

In accordance with the *University Assessment Process Guide,* and in coordination with the University Provost and College Deans, each academic entity reviewed, amended, or revalidated their respective missions. The foundation of this assessment process emanates from the hierarchy of University, College, Department, Program and/or Unit mission. Sixty-six (66) degree awarding academic programs participated in the assessment process. Each developed program-specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and an associated assessment methodology from which they derived their findings. Each then analyzed their results, leading to decisions and/or actions to promote continuous improvement *(#7: The University Assessment Process Guide, 6 April 2017).*

The University's assessment calendar is derived from the academic calendar. By 15 April of each year, each academic program must submit a draft of their assessment cycle plan for the upcoming year through their respective Academic Review Committee Chair. The Dean or Provost reviews and approves assessment plans before submitting them to the Office of the Director of Institutional Effectiveness (DIE). Revisions to assessment plans are completed prior to the beginning of the fall semester. The University will use Taskstream, an assessment management system, to house assessment plans once training is provided to ensure continuity.

Assessment data collection took place throughout the 2016-2017 academic year with spring commencement on May 12, 2017, ending the assessment cycle. Each program identified its findings, completed its analysis, and collectively determined decisions/actions necessary to drive the improvement cycle. Program faculty compared current results to those of the previous year to better develop plans for the upcoming year. Program coordinators then submitted completed assessments, once approved by the respective Dean, to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness (DIE) on 15 June 2017.

An Academic Review Committee, composed of program assessment coordinators, oversees the assessment process within each of the University's four Colleges. Following the completion of all program assessments, each of the four Academic Review Committee Chairs develops an annual assessment report. The report captures the most significant findings and decisions of the past academic year, including proposed and actual changes, an analytical assessment of the potential effects of the changes, and the status of new assessment plans. The DIE consolidates these reports into one executive presentation for the University President's review in the June-July timeframe. (See #8: *AY 2016-2017 Assessment Findings Report, 5 July 2017).*

Key Findings and Decisions, Educational Programs

Evidence that the University identifies expected outcomes, assesses outcomes and makes improvements based on assessment is available on the Institutional Effectiveness website. All sixty-six (66) academic program assessments for AY 2016-2017 are posted under the category heading "ASSESSMENT CYCLE AY 2016-2017 REPORTS" in the sub-category "EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS" (ASSESSMENT CYCLE AY 2016-2017 REPORTS - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS). Below are examples of some of the key findings and decisions from each of the four colleges.

Bachelor of Arts (BA) - Music Education. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 3**: "**Demonstrate specific knowledge of music history and demonstrate the ability to write and speak effectively about the art of music." Measure 3.1 states students in each of the Music History courses are required to write research papers. Students choose subjects, submit proposed topics, submit rough drafts, and after receiving feedback, submit final drafts. Acceptable target is 60% of students receiving a passing grade on the research portion of their grade in the course. The ideal target is 70% receiving a passing grade on the research paper portion of their grade. The findings reflect 114 enrolled, 73 passed the research paper, 64% passed in fall 2016. After the analysis of fall 2016 findings, a Research Assistant was hired to tutor students and offer research and writing assistance for all Music History students. Spring results reflect 87 enrolled, 81 passed increasing the percentage of students passing the research paper to 93%. The increase in student success of 29% between fall and spring highlights the success this decision brought to the program.

Bachelor of Science (BS) - Psychology. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 3: "Ethical and Social Responsibility. Students will be able to apply ethical standards to psychological science and practices and adopt values that build communities. This outcome aligns with the third outcome of the *APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major version 2.0 (2013)*." There are three measures for this student-learning outcome, two of which were collected in the 2016-17 academic cycle (3.1 and 3.2). The target for Measure 3.1 was met. The goal for 3.2 was met by the face-to-face students but not the online students. The cause of this discrepancy is likely due to the different instructors using different case studies and rubrics. This issue will be rectified by using the same case study and rubric (as was specified in the 2017-18 assessment plan) in all sections of the course. The third measure (3.3) was administered to a sample of students as an extra credit option. The goal for that measure was not met; however, it will be implemented as part of the course in the future. In conclusion, the goal for SLO 3 (students demonstrating ethical and social responsibility) has somewhat been achieved and will likely be met in the future without intervention ensuring increased student learning.

Bachelor of Science (BS) - Addiction Studies. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 4. "Communication. Students will be able to write using field appropriate writing style (i.e. APA style) and be able to orally communicate psychological research. This outcome aligns with the fourth outcome of the APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major version 2.0." Measure 4.1. states "Students in PSYC 2430 Introduction to Experimental Methods will write a research paper whereby the entire grade is based on appropriate APA style (refer to Appendix D for PSYC 2430 paper rubric). At least 85% of students will receive a grade of 80% or higher." The goal was not met for this measure. At least 85% of students did not receive a grade of 80% or higher. Not all students met the goal for this measure as a whole; however, the online students did meet this goal, as there is a clear discrepancy between class types. The analysis reflected of the 28 students who completed this assignment, only 67.9% earned a grade of 80% or higher. A chi-squared test for independence showed a significant relationship between course type and percentage of students who earned a grade of 80% or higher, χ^2 (1) = 5.241, p = .022. This indicates that more students in the online sections (86.7%, N = 15) earned a grade of 80% or higher than those in the face to face sections (46.2%, N = 13; refer to Figure 4). However, there was not a significant difference in the average grades between the online (M = 87.73%, SD = 11.13%) and the face-to-face students (M = 80.58%, SD = 11.07%), t (26) = 1.701, p = .101. The resulting decision was to increase the amount of instruction regarding how to write a research paper in APA style for the face-to-face sections. In addition, the grading rubric needs to be enforced by all instructors. It may even be beneficial for the next assessment cycle to record and share the grades for all the sections (Title page, Abstract, Introduction, Methods, and References) of this assignment so the department can assess what specific areas is most troublesome for the students. This assignment will continue to serve as a measure of SLO 4.

Military Science and Leadership Program. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 3. "Third-year Cadets will be capable of planning, coordinating, navigating, motivating, and leading a squad and platoon in the execution of a mission. They will utilize the ability to think critically, exercise sound decision making and adaptive leadership skills. They will be wholly prepared to complete Advanced Camp successfully. MSCI 3010 and MSCI 3020 Course Maps follow SLO 3 measures." Measure 3.2. states cadets are required to write a term paper, ten pages or more, comparing and contrasting the organizational leadership between two or more clubs, sports teams, organizations or extracurricular activities actively participated in, of which one must be as a Cadet or Cadre of the ROTC Battalion. Rubric attached. The target is 100% of enrolled Cadets will be able to describe a basic understanding of organizational leadership by scoring 70% or higher on the writing assignment. The findings reflect 100% of Cadets scored 70% or higher on the organizational leadership assignment. Scores were determined using the Leadership and Problem Solving rubric. Although writing skills remain a concern, even at this junior level, the assignment demonstrated a clear understanding of organizational leadership and a better understanding of the writing process. The decision was to continue to assign the term papers. Because Cadets were struggling with writing, two years ago we requested assistance in establishing an ROTC-dedicated writing lab. Using an extra-services contract, the Dean, Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development, hired an NSU English instructor to teach the monthly lab. The class consisted of freshmen through seniors, but the instructor used a buddy system to keep all engaged. Rather than requiring additional writing exercises, the class reworked previously assigned ROTC essays. Doing so prevented overloading Cadets, who were then more apt to focus on the lab and the learning process. The program administered a writing lab post-test but neglected to administer a pre-test; however, learning has clearly taken place. Writing skills have improved noticeably. The program will request an extension to the contract for this important lab again for AY 2017-2018. In the future, the program will measure progress by administering pre- and post-tests for the writing lab.

Bachelor of Science (BS) – Business Administration. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 4. **"**Global, Cultural, and Ethical Perspective. Students should be able to identify cultural/global challenges facing management in doing business in the international arena." Measure 4.2. Third-year measure of student knowledge of cultural/global perspectives; In BUAD 3270A a written document is required where the acceptable target is 70% of the students will score 70% or higher and the ideal target is 90% of the students will score 70% or higher. The target was met in AY 2016-2017. The findings reflect that in fall 2016, 82 students took BUAD 3270 classes. The semester average grade for the written document results in fall 2016 was 81%. That is, 93% of the students in the fall semester exceeded the Acceptable Target and met the Ideal Target. In the spring 2017 semester, the result was 82%. That is, 97% of the students in the fall semester exceeded the Acceptable Target and met the Ideal Target. The semester average grade for the final project (final report plus presentation) was 81%. In spring 2017, 98 students took BUAD 3270 classes. The semester average grade for this final project was 85%, excluding six incomplete project reports. If the six incomplete project reports were included in the calculation, the Final Report project result would be 81%. The analysis shows the mean final

project grade increased by 4 points in spring 2017 and the percentage of students achieving below 70% was reduced. This improvement is attributed to two major changes in coaching this project. First, the instructor presented a model, exemplary, final report produced in fall 2016 and described to the face-to-face course participants how to create an exemplary model final report. This demonstration was recorded and posted on Moodle for all classes. Students were less confused and made fewer mistakes in their final project format and deliverable. Secondly, the instructor devoted 10-15 minutes in face-to-face classes to encourage group discussion and co-work. Students had more time to work with their group members. This improved group project performance, especially in classroom presentations. The recommendation is for the School of Business faculty responsible for BUAD 3270 to make available to students the video and face-to-face presentation of an exemplary model as a point for reference as well as additional group discussion periods.

Nursing (RN-BSN). Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 7. "Apply principles of leadership to design, manage, coordinate, and evaluate health care delivery." Measure leadership analysis assignment (NURB 4291) with a target of 75% of the students enrolled achieving 80% or higher on the leadership analysis assignment. Findings reflect 75% (32 of 43) achieved a course grade of 80% or higher and CENLA (in-class) 99% (15 of16) achieved a course grade of 80% or higher thereby meeting the outcome. It was decided to continue to use assessment methods. Faculty will continue to encourage students to use the rubric to guide the assignment. In the Moodle shell of the 4291, the faculty decided to include with each assignment a detailed explanation of the assignment with resources available to assist them. In addition, course resource packets were developed in fall 2016 to assist students with established deadlines for all assignments. Also, the faculty collaborated with MOODLE teaching and innovation team for revision of rubric for this assignment. Plan is to continue to utilize the rubric for 2017 and monitor the outcome. Will continue use leadership analysis assignment and monitor outcome.

Early Childhood Education (BS). Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 4. "Students will exhibit creative thinking that yields engaging ideas, processes, materials, and experiences appropriate for the discipline (SPA #3)" assessed through a lesson plan and reflection in ECED 3110. The assessment is evaluated using a rubric, and the benchmark performance is that at least 80% will score Meets Expectations. Finding was 87.5% of the candidates achieved "Meets Expectations" In the analysis, the data showed that candidates are mastering the NAEYC standards addressed in this assessment tool. After the last iteration, graded rubrics were examined, and the professor placed greater emphasis on using technology the next time the course was taught. As a result, scores increased in this area. The decision was to use the data from this iteration to inform instruction the next time the course is taught. For example, we will have a professional development session on Differentiation the next time the course is taught.

Bachelor of Social Work (BSW). Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 4. "Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. Social workers are knowledgeable about human behavior across the life course; the range of social systems in which people live; and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being. Social workers apply theories and knowledge from the liberal arts to understand biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development. Social workers utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation. Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment." Measure 7.2. Student Competency Based Self-Evaluation. Students in SOWK 4040, Research, complete a Self-Evaluation upon completion of course work (during the semester of graduation). The instrument measures student perception of competency across various dimensions related to each Competency. The measurement benchmark at NSU for each competency is 80%. This means that, at NSU, 80% of student's will be rated as "adequate" or above on each competency (scored a three or higher on the four-point scale). Data is gathered each semester by the assessment coordinator and analyzed as previously noted. Data from each semester and academic year is compared to each previous cohort. Finding: 90.5% of 34 students met competency. Analysis: The competency benchmark was met. There was a slight increase from the previous academic year. Ongoing education of competency language, as well as course changes, continues to increase overall student competency. Action - Decision or Recommendation: Phase in new assessment tools to more accurately assess student competency in multiple points of the student career.

Hospitality Management (HMT) BS. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 1. **"**Select career goals within the hospitality industry and identify effective strategies for achieving them."
Measure: 1.1. Students will complete activities and/or assignments in which they identify at last two career goals within the hospitality industry and two specified strategies for achieving each career goal, identify professional traits, and/or understand workplace issues. The acceptable target is to have two career goals with two strategies to achieve each goal. The ideal target is to have three career goals with three strategies to achieve each goal. Findings reflect 100% of the students completing the Career Research Assignment identified at least three careers within the hospitality industry along with the strategies necessary to achieve these goals. The analysis shows that the students enrolled in HMT 1050 (Professionalism in Hospitality Management and Tourism) provided more than adequate responses for the number of career goals in the assignment. They also provided two strategies for each career goal. A total number of 26 assignments were completed during the spring 2017 semester. It is important for students in the introductory classes to understand the career opportunities available to them and the necessary experience required to enter the various careers. This assignment was given due to faculty members recognizing a need for students to understand the vast amount of career opportunities within the hospitality industry. The ideal target was exceeded because the assignment was lengthened and created considering the many different sectors and careers available in hospitality. The decision was the assignment will remain in the introductory course as it is in current form so that students will be engaged with the career exploration process. Scores of this assignment will continue to be monitored to ensure the delivery and expectations

of the assignment are achieving the objectives and meeting the needs of the program and student.

Communications BA. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 1. "Communication graduates will write clearly and correctly in formats appropriate for communication professionals." Measure 1.1. Taught for the first time in spring 2017, this introductory writing course for communication majors targets improving the fundamentals of writing clearly and correctly. The signature assessment for this course is a test given at both the beginning and the end of the semester. The test identifies components of writing that are vital to the success of a communications professional. Students will be expected to demonstrate strong comprehension of these concepts in future required classes, specifically COMM 2510. The target is 70% of possible points. Findings reflect target was met. Including only students that took both tests, the initial testing average was 59.7%. The second testing average increased by 14.25%, resulting in an average of 73.95%. Out of 20 students, only one scored lower on the second test than the first. *Analysis shows that w*hile the improvement from the start of the semester to the end was significant and consistent, there is still an overall deficiency in the writing, grammar, spelling, and punctuation skills of incoming students. These deficiencies create problems as students face comprehensive writing assignments in more advanced classes within the department, which is the primary reason this class was established. It is challenging to address all areas of deficiency within the period of one semester, but the instructor believes that this class will contribute to improvement of student writing. The instructor recommends that this class continue to be required for all students entering into the Department of New Media, Journalism and Communication Arts. As the course develops, more measures of progress will be implemented (rubrics, quizzes, etc.) to collect specific data regarding which areas of writing basics students find most challenging.

Biology BS. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 4. "Students will employ critical thinking to interpret scientific literature." Measure 4.1. Throughout the course, students will read scientific articles from the primary literature and be required to pass quizzes over the material. The target is to have 70% of students attain a final average quiz grade of ≥70%. Findings reflect the target was met. 24/31 (77.4%) students finished the course with an average of ≥70% on quizzes. 7/31 students finished the course with ≥70% on quizzes. The analysis showed more than 70% of students reached the target set for this outcome showing that upper-level students nearing the end of the program are able to think critically about scientific literature and perform to the set target. The decision is that the target should be raised to a higher level to raise the caliber of training. The future target of this SLO will be for ≥70% of students to attain a final average quiz grade of ≥90%.

Mathematics BS. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 4. "Students will gain a strong understanding of the fundamental ideas, concepts, and applications of mathematics." Measure 1.1. MATH 2110 is taken at the end of the freshman year. MATH 3100 is the last explicitly required course

before the student begins taking upper-level electives in mathematics. MATH 4950 is the senior research project course taken shortly before graduation. By looking at the pass rate in each of these courses, we get a sense of whether our majors are making progress. Our targets are 75% of Mathematics majors earn a Grade of C or higher in 2110. 90% of Mathematics majors earn a Grade of C or higher in 3100 and 4950. Findings reflect; MATH 2110 – 5 of 5 math majors met the goal (3 of 3 in fall 2016, 2 of 2 in spring 2017); MATH 3100 – 3 of 4 math majors met the goal (3 of 4 in fall 2016, not taught in spring 2017); MATH 4950 – 6 of 6 math majors met the goal (4 of 4 in fall 2016, 2 of 2 in spring 2017). The analysis shows we met our goal in 2 of 3 courses. This is a marked improvement in MATH 2110 and consistent mastery in MATH 4950. We may need to assess our goal in MATH 3100; for two of the last three years, we have missed the goal of 90% success because our numbers are so small that only one student making less than a C causes us to fall short. On the other hand, it was the very same student in fall 2015 and fall 2016 who failed to earn a C in MATH 3100. This may be more of a statistical anomaly than a trend. The decision was not to make any changes at this time as our added attention towards the calculus sequence seems to have produced better results in MATH 2110. Senior faculty will discuss whether changes need to be made in MATH 3100.

Homeland Security MA. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 2. "Third-semester students will know the role and functions of the various agencies comprising DHS and the U.S. intelligence agencies in assessing foreign, domestic, and cyber threats, what counterterrorism strategies are in use to thwart terrorist aggression and the constitutional issues associated with these strategies." Measure: 2.1. 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 homeland security policy, domestic and international trends in terrorism, the evolving nature of cyberspace, and how the homeland security associated laws affect the operations of law enforcement and intelligence operations. At least 80% of students sampled will score 75% or higher on the evaluation. Findings reflect the target was met with 80% of students sampled scoring 75% or higher on the evaluation. In the analysis it was determined that a reasonable sample is taking two papers from fall HS 5050 (5 x students total), three from fall HS 5150 (10 x students total), four papers fall 5750 (14 x students total), three from spring HS 5050 (8 students total), two from spring 5500 (8 x students total), and 2 from spring 5750 (8 x students total). The average rubric score was 3.3, just above "meets standard". The average calculated score was 88.9, which would equate to a high B letter grade. The grade distribution was reasonable ranging from a low of 72 to a high of 96. The target was met in that 80% of students sampled scored 75% or higher on the evaluation. The decision is that the target score needs to be increased to at least 80% of students sampled will score 90% or higher in order to push for continued improvement. Students will also be encouraged to enroll in English 3230, Technical Composition, or 3210 Advanced Composition to refine their writing skills.

English MA. Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 1. "Students will employ creative thinking, innovation, and creative inquiry." Measure 1.1. Each of the five concentrations in the M.A. program in English offers two options for degree completion, the Thesis Option: Students choosing to write a thesis as the culminating project for their degree will enroll in 6 hours of ENGL 5980: Thesis. A fully approved thesis proposal must be on file in the Department and the Graduate School prior to registration for thesis hours. Thesis students must successfully defend the thesis prior to graduation. Thesis students complete 24 hours of coursework (8 classes) and 6 hours of thesis, ENGL 5980, in which the thesis will be written and defended. The other option is the Papers-in-lieu Option: Students choosing to write papers-in-lieu as their culminating project for their degree must enroll in 3 hours of ENGL 6950: Research Problems. An overview of the papers must be created in consultation with the project director prior to registration for research hours. The papers must be approved by the student's director and submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School. PIL students complete 27 hours of coursework (9 classes) and 3 hours of Research Problems, ENGL 6950, in which two research papers-in-lieu of thesis will be written and submitted. A rubric is use in scoring. The rubric describes in detail the measurable outcomes for the degree completion options and the assessment columns for each outcome. The acceptable target is all students achieve an average of 3.5 or higher on the rubric. The ideal target is for students to achieve a 5.0 on the rubric. In the summary of findings, the acceptable target was met by having 31 students completing their extended, research-based writing project in the 2016 cycle with an arithmetic mean of 4.88 on the rubric for employment of creative thinking, innovation, and critical inquiry. Based on our findings that our graduates achieved an average of 4.88 on Measure 1 with an achievement target of 3.5, we determined that although there is no action needed, we continue to strive to improve. Thus, to assist further in moving from taking a reasoned approach, adequately argued regarding their chosen topic to taking interesting and innovative approaches that make original contributions to the field, we are redesigning the required course, English 5800: Bibliography and Literary Research, to better encourage students to develop their authorial voices.