

AC 2019-2020 Assessment

Homeland Security MS

Program College: Arts and Sciences

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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 Bachelor 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 in addition to a Pre-law and Paralegal Studies concentration and minor. The department

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also delivers a Master 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.

Purpose: The master's program will prepare students to engage in research from a cross-national and global perspective. It prepares students for entry positions in government and the private sector in which the ability to comprehend, influence, and respond to government policy from a national, international, and global security perspective is increasingly critical. It will also prepare interested students for the pursuit of further / additional advanced degrees in Homeland Security, Political Science, Strategic Leadership, or International Relations at other institutions.

Methodology: The assessment process for the MA/MS 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).
- (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.

Note: The Homeland Security Degree program assessment leverages five Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) expressing what the student will know, be able to do, or be able to demonstrate when they complete the program. Every course within the program is nested in a student's learning outcome attainment. However, HS 5000, HS 5050 and HS 5200 are foundational, and as such have been explicitly addressed in the first two SLOs due to the magnitude of the effect they have on a student's overall success in the program. The data derived from these courses are especially helpful in the overall program design. Due to changes instituted in the program of study beginning Fall 2019 we will no longer be separating our discussion of results for HS 5000 and HS 5050. The new program of study requires that every incoming student take both HS 5000 and HS

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5050 thus providing a more robust pool of data and ensuring that we have 100% assessment of all incoming students in both courses.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1. First and second-semester students will be able to describe the historical evolution and context of early American domestic homeland security challenges from the establishment of the Department in 2002 through today's international and globalization challenges.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus objectives.

HS 5000: International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime, and Covert Ops
(**Foundational Course**)

HS 5050: Homeland Security (**Foundational Course**)

HS 5650: International Security and Globalization (**Support Course**)

Measure 1.1. (Direct – knowledge)

On an annual basis, students enrolled in HS 5000, and HS 5050, required courses for HS Master's students, and HS 5650, a support course, will be administered course exams containing a series of questions taken from a question bank developed by a faculty committee designed to evaluate the student's basic knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of Homeland Security from early America through current international and globalization challenges. Eighty percent (80%) of enrolled students will be able to describe a basic understanding by scoring (85%) or higher on the exams demonstrating a basic understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of Homeland Security from early America through current international and globalization challenges.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. Eighty percent of students met the target scoring an average of 86% across all question modules, a 2% improvement over the previous assessment. Based on the analysis of these results, it was determined that students were well versed in the history of Homeland Security but struggled relating foundational concepts and theories to situations taking place today around the globe. In response, faculty redesigned and restructured the course modules on the development of Homeland Security by securing updated textbooks with more relevant scenarios. Faculty increased the exposure of the students to current and historical responses to terrorism through subject-specific discussion boards; integrated redundancy of the key learning objectives throughout the course; added subject-specific readings to the course reading list, and redesigned the exams to force students to interpret scenarios based on reflection and past learning. As a result, in 2019-2020, 90% of students scored 88% across all question modules reflecting the student's basic knowledge and understanding of the foundational concepts, theories, strategies, and challenges of Homeland Security from early America through current international and globalization challenges. However, despite the 2% increase, students struggled to identify key milestones in the evolution of Homeland

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Security from 1800 to the present day. The average score was 5.86 out of 10 on the rubric. As this topic is covered during the first couple of weeks in the course, the faculty believe students are still acclimatizing to the instruction and are not retaining the details of key historical events due to other distracters associated with starting a new course. Students may be better served by apportioning this module of instruction over the entire first half of the semester. By focusing on current events and requiring students to reflect on past events will allow students to associate better the lessons learned and gain a better appreciation of the evolution of the Homeland Security enterprise.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, and to drive improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will reshape the first half of the course by apportioning the module on the evolution of Homeland Security from 1800 to present over the first half of the semester. In doing so, students will have a better association and appreciation of how past events shaped the Homeland Security Enterprise. Questions and discussion boards will be designed to drive students to compare how past events drove policy and doctrine and its effects on security and *the All-Hazards* approach. Faculty feel these changes will result in students having a better understanding of the evolution of Homeland Security.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

Students will demonstrate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills through scenario-driven exercises 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. Eighty (80%) of the students will score 13.6 (85%) or higher (max is 16) on the Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was not met. The AC 2018-2019 results for SLO 1 measure 1.2 was 78% of students earning a score of 13.6 (85%) or higher on the rubric (attached), a failure to meet the updated target. Based on the analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, and to drive improvement in 2019-2020 faculty increased the number of critical thinking questions/exercises (includes discussion boards) emphasizing a more holistic approach by focusing on the student's ability to read a question, interpret what is being asked, develop selection criteria, analyze potential solutions, make a selection, and then translate that data into an intelligent and sincere response or by developing a comprehensive course of action. As a result, in 2019-2020 80% of students scored an average of 14.2 (88.7% of rubric max 16)) on the Critical Thinking-Problem Solving Rubric reflecting students can analyze and develop a response to a homeland security situation in which they develop a plan that contains relevant, justifiable, feasible, and actionable solutions based on the information presented. However, of the four dimensions assessed by the rubric, Inquire, Analyze, Evaluate, and Solve, students scored lowest in analyzing data and applying a multidimensional approach.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-

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2020 results, and to drive improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will increase the opportunity to have students analyze data and deliver their findings using a multidiscipline approach accounting for both infrastructural and human cost. Faculty will create scenarios where the information provided allows students to focus their efforts on these two dimensions. Taking this approach will increase the student's understanding and comfort in implementing and demonstrating their knowledge of these steps as part of their critical thinking problem-solving skillset.

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.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below. HS

5100: Venue and Event Security

HS 5150: Domestic Terrorism Prevention and Analysis

HS 5300: Constitutional Issues and Global Security HS

5400: Network Security and Cyberterrorism

HS 5750: Homeland Security Policy Seminar

Measure: 2.1. (Direct – knowledge)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from the 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 (90%) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met. Eighty-two percent (82%) of students scored 90% or higher on the evaluation. Students did well in their ability to apply the fundamentals of homeland security policies in both the private and public sector. Students struggled with application of theory to non-normal situations. Students understood the basic knowledge of homeland security, however when given situations not directly related to homeland security, they struggled with applying this knowledge to situations that were indirectly related to homeland security. Based on the analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, and to drive improvement in AC 2019-2020, faculty implemented the following changes to drive improvement; faculty utilized more real world situations and provided material to more adequately prepare the student to apply the homeland security doctrine and lessons learned to real word situations. As a result, in 2019-2020 over 80 percent of students scored over 90 reflecting an improvement in this area. These changes proved to have a positive impact on the performance of the students.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-

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2020 results, and to drive improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will implement the following changes to seek continuous improvement. Faculty will utilize homeland security situations that have evolved and provide assignments that require the students to apply knowledge and understanding of homeland security incidents that have occurred within the past 3-5 years. Faculty will provide students with assignments that involve situations that are secondary homeland security situations. These situations will often include assignments dealing with local law enforcement entities that may not initially be classified as a national incident.

Measure: 2.2. (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of each semester, the program will sample students with a survey, which will state: "In my homeland security courses I was provided a master's level of understanding of homeland security policy, strategy, threat assessment and trends, associated law and procedures, and how the various agencies interact across the spectrum of operations." 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 not met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of students agreed with the statements on the survey. Student responses, although low continue to be positive regarding the content of their courses. Based on the analysis of these results and to increase the response rate in 2019-2020 the means of survey delivery were changed from a separate survey to integrating the survey via the final exam. The percentage of responses in the strongly agree or agree categories have risen from 87% in AC 2018-2019 to 89% for AC 2019-2020. Students were required to respond but their responses are not factored into their exam or course grade. As a result, in 2019-2020 this process was not fully implemented, and more information will be gathered at the end of the 2021 program to assess its effectiveness.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, and to drive improvement, the semester surveys will be utilized in a course-specific model which will give faculty more granular detail on the effects of the improvement of content. The department will be raising the target to 90% of students agree with the statements. Once these changes are fully implemented the program will be better able to meet the needs of the students and potential employers

SLO 3. Fourth-semester students will demonstrate that they understand the current policies and procedures to mitigate, prevent and respond to a disaster, analyze and implement regimens for safety and risk reduction, the ethics of care and compassionate leadership, and the mechanisms for measuring all-hazards threat and recovery.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

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HS 5200: Research Design and Methods in Homeland Security
HS 5350: Executive Leadership, Diplomacy, and Ethics in Homeland Security
HS 5500: Counterterrorism, Intel Analysis, and Advanced Criminal Investigations HS
5550: Advanced Cyber-forensics and Cyberwarfare Issues
HS 5600: Managing Chaotic Organizations
HS 5700: Peace Studies, Conflict Transformation, and Global Security

Measure 3.1. (Direct – Knowledge / Ability)

At the end of their fourth semester students will be administered a series of scenarios assessing their knowledge and ability to conduct risk assessments, implement mitigation measures, navigate leadership challenges, and know the foundational concepts of the all-hazards approach to the emergency management process through scenario driven exercises. Eighty percent (80%) of enrolled students will score (85%) or higher demonstrating an ability to conduct risk assessments, implement mitigation measures, navigate leadership challenges, and know the foundational concepts of the all-hazards approach to the emergency management process.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was not met. Students did well in defining the issues as they relate to homeland security risk assessment measures. However, students struggled with developing suitable and acceptable mitigation measures and in determining the vast range of support agencies capable of contributing to acceptable solutions. Based on the analysis of the results, in 2019-2020 students were given more diverse scenarios in which they were challenged in developing risk assessments, implementing mitigation measures, navigating and selecting possible support agencies, identifying the leadership challenges, and demonstrating their understanding of the all-hazards foundational concepts. As a result, in 2019-2020, only 78% of students successfully scored 85% or higher on the scenario exercises. Students continued to struggle with developing suitable and acceptable mitigation measures outside of those associated with hurricanes and flooding. Students need to better understand how to leverage the National Disaster Recovery Framework to assist disaster-impacted communities, the importance of the incident command system (ICS) and why it serves as a good basis for National Incident Management System and how the function of homeland security is managed at the state and local levels.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, and to seek improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will use more appropriate/less elaborate scenarios. The scenarios will increase in complexity in a predictable pattern to allow students to better discern how each challenge should be addressed. Students will be given more time to reflect on previous lessons. The faculty will develop examples that highlight the learning objectives so that students better understand the expectations of the scenario exercises. By designing scenarios that specifically address each problem area will better prepare students to diagnose and develop appropriate responses that are grounded in doctrine and tailored to the specific circumstances of a scenario.

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Measure 3.2. (Direct – Skill / Ability)

Two or more faculty members will review position paper submissions by students using Critical Thinking – Problem Solving Rubric (16 point) (attached), in which they are required to analyze and respond to some aspect of Homeland Security, Policy, Strategy, or Leadership. The paper requires all students 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 90% (14.4/16) or higher.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met. Students did well in their ability to formulate their thoughts and ideas around the material presented in the course(s) and present that material in graduate level projects and assignments. Students did not do well in understanding situations outside those presented in mainstream media. Based on the analysis of the results the faculty implemented more historical case studies where students could review the entire cycle of cause and effect. Additionally, students were required to provide a risk assessment and after-action review of current homeland security issues using the all hazards doctrine as the guide. As a result, in 2019-2020 the target was 85% percent of students scoring 90 percent or better. These changes that were made had a direct positive impact on the student's ability to apply the knowledge from within the class to real world situations occurring.

Decision: In AC 2019-20 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, and to drive improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will enhance the number and sophistication of the critical thinking exercises, challenging the students to apply the knowledge they have been gained in the lessons. Additionally, faculty will move into a mixture of testing processes that will allow students to not only show they could understand the material but more importantly apply that material to real world situations.

SLO 4. Students will demonstrate proficiency in evaluating and analyzing Homeland Security research and being able to frame their own research questions.

Course Map: Tied to course syllabus below.

HS 5200: Research Design and Methods in Homeland Security

HS 5900: Graduate Seminar for Thesis Research and Writing Methods in HS

Measure 4.1. (Direct – Knowledge)

Eighty-five (change for 2019-20 based on 2018-19) percent (85%) of students taking the comprehensive examination will demonstrate proficiency on Part I of the exam,

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which requires students to analyze and critique three foundational and standardized questions.

The evaluation is based on a skill assessment Comprehensive Exam Rubric (attached). The rubric consists of five skill assessment areas, which faculty grading the exam will score from zero (low proficiency/fail) to three (Accomplished proficiency). A combined score of 30 (minimum of 10 points per question) and above on the rubric will demonstrate student proficiency on this part of the comprehensive exam.

The Graduate Program Coordinator evaluates and reports scores. Students need a minimum score of 20 (10 points per question) to pass the two remaining questions focused on their specific areas of interest.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met, which led to an increase in the goal of the 80% success being raised to 85%, which was achieved by all students in 2019-2020. Students did well in addressing the questions included that allowed for student choice, thus mirroring their specific interest. Students struggled with the newest required question, which requires a more sophisticated approach to the overall evolution of security from a policy perspective. Based on analysis of the 2018-2019 results, in 2019-2020 students were exposed to a broader body of literature on the complex entity that is “homeland security” as well as expanded use of forecasting reports on the future of the enterprise. Students did well with the expansion of the specialized questions in the second section of the examination with allowed them to really display the breadth and depth of their knowledge within the field. As a result, in 2019-2020, 100 percent of students successfully scored at least 11.9 on each of the questions on the comprehensive examination on the evaluation rubric, demonstrating proficiency, and that the overall changes made to the content and methods appear to be working, although these results are somewhat suspect due to low enrollment in the HS 5900 course, where the comprehensive exam is administered.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, and to drive improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will evaluate practices put into place for 2019-2020, due to the number of students enrolled in HS 5900 in Spring 2020 (2) the faculty will monitor the results for this measure over the next academic year to ensure a greater depth of data before any large-scale modifications are enacted.

Measure 4.2. (Direct - Knowledge)

Ninety percent (90%) of thesis and non-thesis proposals will demonstrate student proficiency in developing research questions about political-security phenomena that directly relate to and expand upon an existing theoretical body of knowledge.

At the end of each thesis and non-thesis proposal, committee members will score the proposal using the Thesis – Non-Thesis Assessment Rubric (see attachment). The rubric consists of twelve skill assessment items, which the thesis committee members will score from low proficiency to high proficiency. A cumulative score of 125 or more

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will demonstrate proficiency.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met. Students did well with the overall process of proposal and execution but struggled with formulating the original research question. Some of the students continue to suffer from a lack of objectivity when it is time to begin this process, although the changes faculty have instituted program wide have significantly reduced this phenomenon. Based on analysis of the 2018-2019 results, in 2019-2020 students were exposed to a broader body of literature research design and modeling with an emphasis on topic selection and focus. The expansion of earlier efforts in the HS 5000/5050 and HS 5200 courses has also continued with refinement of the assignments utilized. As a result, in 2019-2020, 100 percent of students scored 140 point or higher reflecting proficiency and that the long-term improvements are effective.

Decision: In AC 2019-2020, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, and to drive improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will implement the following changes for AY 2021-2021. The target rubric score for the proposal will be raised to 150 out of 200 to continue the desire to raise the caliber of the projects that the students produce, thus increasing the measure of the success of the revisions that the program has undergone as part of this process.

Measure 4.3. (Direct - Knowledge)

Ninety percent (90%) of student thesis and or non-thesis papers will use the most appropriate methodology for the research question/hypotheses addressed. At the end of each thesis, Paper-in-Lieu, or Project, committee members will score the submission utilizing the Thesis – Non-Thesis Assessment Rubric (see attachment). The rubric consists of twelve skill assessment items, which the thesis committee members will score from low proficiency to highly proficient. A score of 125 or higher will demonstrate proficiency. The Program Coordinator will evaluate and report scores.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019, the target was met. All papers attained a rubric score of 180 points or higher out of 200. The changes implemented for 2019-2020 based upon the 2018-2019 assessment have had a positive impact on student learning and the student's ability to demonstrate proficiency in developing research questions. The change of overall focus of the HS 5200 course toward a completed proposal has had a positive effect on the students during their final semesters in the program and indicates that the continuous improvement plan is producing enhanced learning for the students. The ability for the thesis/PIL and the Project courses to solely focus on the writing process instead of trying to first formulate research topics or question has greatly improved the student's learning experience. For AY 2019-2020 faculty began reevaluating this SLO with the goal for refining it to focus on the proposal process more closely, although lower enrollment in the course leads us to continue evaluation as faculty gather more robust data. As a result, in 2019-2020 the target was met reflecting that the revisions faculty have instituted are effective.

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Decision: In AC 2019-2020 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results, and to drive improvement, in AC 2020-2021, faculty will raise the target score to 185 out of 200 to further evaluate the impact of the revisions and will also provide more in-depth instruction on the writing process to further enhance the students' knowledge of writing a proposal for a thesis/PIL.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvement Based on Analysis of Results. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2019-2020. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results.

- SLO 1. Measure 1.1. Updated textbooks with more relevant scenarios, increased the exposure of the students to current and historical responses to terrorism through subject specific topic discussion boards; integrated redundancy of the key learning objectives throughout the course; added subject specific readings to the course reading list, and redesigned the exams to force students to interpret scenario's based on reflection and past learning.
- SLO 1. Measure 1.2. Faculty increased the number of critical thinking questions/exercises (includes discussion boards) emphasizing a more holistic approach by focusing on the student's ability to read a question, interpret what is being asked, develop selection criteria, analyze potential solutions, make a selection, and then translate that data into an intelligent and sincere response or by developing a comprehensive course of action.
- SLO 2. Measure 2.1. Faculty implemented the following changes to drive improvement; faculty utilized more real-world situations and provided material to more adequately prepare the student to apply the homeland security doctrine and lessons learned to real word situations.
- SLO 2. Measure 2.2. The means of survey delivery changed from a separate survey to integrating the survey via the final exam. Students were required to respond but their responses are not factored into their exam or course grade.
- SLO 3. Measure 3.1. Students were given more diverse scenarios in which they were challenge in developing risk assessments, implementing mitigations measures, navigating, and selecting possible support agencies, identifying the leadership challenges, and demonstrating their understanding of the all-hazards foundational concepts.
- SLO 3. Measure 3.2. Based on the analysis of the results the faculty implemented more historical case studies where students could review the entire cycle of cause and effect. Additionally, students were required to provide a risk assessment and after-action review of current homeland security issues using the all hazards doctrine as the guide.

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- SLO 4. Measure 4.1. Students were exposed to a broader body of literature on the complex entity that is “homeland security” as well as expanded use of forecasting reports on the future of the enterprise. Students were exposed to specialized questions and required to demonstrate their breadth and depth of their knowledge within the field.
- SLO 4. Measure 4.2. Students were exposed to a broader body of literature research design and modeling with an emphasis on topic selection and focus. The expansion of earlier efforts in the HS 5000/5050 and HS 5200 courses has continued with the refinement of the assignments utilized.
- SLO 4. Measure 4.3. Students were exposed to a broader body of literature on research design and implementation. The expansion of initial data-driven changes in the HS 5200 course to ensure that all students have a solid foundation in research methodology has also continued with refinement of the assignments utilized and an increase in the depth and breadth of the examples employed and lastly the final paper in the course is the student’s proposal for their thesis, Paper in Lieu or final Project.
- Program-wide changes that have been implemented, specifically the redesign of the program of study to reflect data driven decisions about required and elective offerings. from the modification of course content to the systematic utilization of evaluation rubrics have resulted in students learning in greater detail and demonstrating a better grasp of the writing process and the expectations of the program faculty. The utility of the rubrics to enhance student’s writing process is significant. Empowering students with the tools necessary to be successful is at the core of continuous improvement goals.
- The biggest change is a redesign of the program to restructure the required/elective matrix to ensure that all students are exposed to courses that have been identified by students as key to their success.
- Redesigned the course modules on the development of Homeland Security as a concept and increased the exposure of the students to the current and historical responses to terrorism; integrated reviews of the key learning objectives throughout the course; enhanced the literature contained in the reading list for the courses to more fully immerse the students in the contextual knowledge required.
- Redesigned the course modules to increase the exposure of the students to the context in which the Department of Homeland Security was established and the ongoing debate that is taking place in America concerning the threat of terrorist attack (s) on the US homeland. Expanded the module addressing the historical evolution and context of early America domestic homeland security challenges from the establishment of the Department in 2002 through today’s international and globalization challenges was also implemented.

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- Based upon findings in the previous assessment of the briefing note assignments the course materials were augmented with the inclusion of activities designed to facilitate an earlier development of the objective detachment needed for this type of exercise.
- Course materials were modified to extend and diversify the types of scenarios presented to the students to tax their skills and encourage more imaginative approaches to the situations presented.
- The modifications made to the HS 5200, a research methods course, based upon AC 2018-2019 data have had a significant impact on the quality of proposals and improved student learning in the program. These changes included an expansion of the literature examined in the course and most importantly the final paper in the course is the student's proposal for their thesis, Paper in Lieu, or Final Project.

These changes in HS 5200 allow the student/teacher interactions during the thesis/PIL/Project completion phase of the program to focus more on the actual writing process rather than formulating a research question or project area as was the case before the institution of these changes

Plan of Action Moving Forward.

Looking ahead to AC 2020-2021, and in keeping with the continuous improvement model, faculty have enacted significant changes in the admission process, seeking to address the discrepancies between academic success for applicants and impediments to their admission. It has been found in the assessments that students who have been admitted provisionally, largely due to low GRE scores, often possess the qualities necessary to succeed in a graduate program. Faculty will be closely monitoring the progress of these new cohorts through continued assessment.

Based on the AC 2019-2020 assessment report faculty have made changes to the program and will be changing and updating several student learning outcomes and their attendant measures. These changes were made based upon the findings in the AC 2016-2017 and AC 2017-2018 assessments and to bring the program in line with comparable programs at peer institutions. Faculty will continue piloting two hybrid courses, HS 5000 and HS 5050 will again be offered this fall as distance learning courses with the availability of WebEx interaction by online-only students, faculty are using these courses as a vehicle to test the impact of more traditional style student/student and student/instructor interaction on student learning outcomes. Faculty will also be providing more in-depth instruction and guidance on the writing process to continue to improve the students knowledge of writing proposals for thesis/PIL.

Changes to student learning outcomes will continue to be primarily concentrated on the target scores and desired percentage of students achieving these goals. Based on the current and prior results faculty believe that outcomes are addressing the area's most important to student success. As a key component of continuous improvement model faculty will continue surveying students in every course to ensure that goals for their

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learning are being met.

Dimension Assessed	Accomplished 4	Proficient 3	Developing 2	Beginning 1
(Inquire) Identify and define key issue/s and/or problem/s	Clearly, accurately, and appropriately identifies key issue/s and/or problem/s.	Identifies most or all key issue/s and/or problem/s. Some minor inaccuracies or omissions may be present, but do not interfere with meaning.	Identifies some key issue/s and/or problem/s. May have some inaccuracies, omissions or errors present that interfere with meaning	Most or all key issues/ and/or problem/s are not identified or defined or are identified or defined inaccurately. Meaning is unclear.
(Analyze) Present and Analyze Data/ Information	Presents appropriate, sufficient, and credible data/information. Clearly analyzes information for accuracy, relevance, and validity. Information clearly relates to meaning.	Presents sufficient and appropriate data/information. Generally, analyzes data/information for accuracy, relevance, and validity. Minor inaccuracies or omissions do not interfere with analysis or meaning.	Presents some appropriate data/information. May miss or ignore relevant data /information. Analysis is limited or somewhat inappropriate. May contain inaccuracies or omissions that interfere with analysis and/or meaning.	Does not present relevant and appropriate data/information. Fails to analyze or uses inaccurate or inappropriate analysis of data/information. Copies information without analysis.
(Evaluate) Apply a Multi-Dimensional approach/ Consider context	Clearly applies a multi-dimensional approach. Synthesizes various perspectives. Acknowledges limits of position or context.	Acknowledges multiple approaches. Some synthesis of perspectives. May not fully acknowledge limits of position or context but is aware of limits or context.	Somewhat simplified position with some sense of multiple approaches. Minor or vague synthesis of perspectives. Some acknowledgement position may have limits. May not acknowledge context.	Student's position is grounded in a singular, often personal perspective. Position may be simplistic and obvious. Little or no awareness that position may have limits or context.
(Solve) Demonstrate Sound Reasoning and Conclusions	Reasoning is logical and creative, consistent, complete, and often unique. Conclusion is complex and/or detailed, well supported, complete, relevant	Reasoning is mostly logical, complete, and consistent. Demonstrates some unique or creative insight. Conclusion is generally complete, supported, and mostly consistent and relevant	Reasoning contains elements of logic and/or creative insight, but not fully resolved. May have minor inconsistencies or omissions. Conclusion is relevant but abbreviated or simplified, not fully supported, and/or contains minor	Reasoning is illogical, simplistic, inconsistent, or absent. Conclusion is simplistic and stated as an absolute, or inconsistent with evidence or reasoning. Lack of coherent or clear conclusion.

<https://www.lanec.edu/sites/default/files/assessment/ctrubric-w-12.pdf>