

**Degree/Certificate:** BA

**Major/Option:** International Affairs

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### Part I – Program SLO Assessment Report for 2012-13

**Part I – for the 2012-13 academic year:** Except for the formatting, this section **nearly identical** to previous years' templates for the Program SLO Assessment reports. Because we have begun asking Deans to create College-Level Summary Reports annually, the template has been slightly modified for a) clarity for Chairs and Directors, and b) a closer fit with what the Deans and Associate Deans are being asked to report.

1. **Student Learning Outcome:** The student performance or learning objective as published either in the catalog or elsewhere in your department literature.

General Education Assessment for International Studies Course, INST 200

Goal 1: For students to understand at least one modern problem or topic linking societies within the global community. (For example, such problems including but not limited to topics as nationalism and ethnic conflict, global communications and technology, modern war, global hunger, comparative world revolutions, comparative world economic systems, and the City.)

2. **Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** Indicate whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.

SLO is met after changes resulting from ongoing assessments, referencing assessment results from the previous year to highlight revisions;

SLO is met, but with changes forthcoming;

SLO met without change required

3. **Strategies and methods:** Description of assessment method and choices, why they were used and how they were implemented.

For this introductory class, I began with establishing a baseline of student understanding and knowledge about global issues. To do this, on the first day I asked students to write an essay on what they consider to be the most pressing contemporary global issue. The essays were short, one page discussions that served to acquaint me with their level of sophistication regarding global affairs. The essays also prompted students to begin conceptualizing how they viewed the world.

Bookending this exercise was a final essay addressing the same question. For the final essay, however, students were to complete the assignment outside the class hour. The expected length for these essays was two-to-three typewritten pages. As expected, the final essays were more thoughtful with evidence supporting a greater awareness and maturity regarding global politics.

By posing the questions in such broad terms, the students were allowed a large degree of flexibility in their answers, giving me an indication of their skill level and global literacy. I also chose this method because it complemented my course content which exposed students to numerous global concerns ranging from the topical such as environmental problems and terrorism to the geographical including the post-Soviet world and the rise of China. From this array of topics, students moved from the general to the specific in their individual papers. Throughout the process, students mastered the understanding of “at least one modern problem or topic linking societies within the global community” which the final assessment instrument measured.

4. **Observations gathered from data:** Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #3.

- a. Findings: As discussed above, with the baseline established in the initial essays, the final essays revealed an increased level of understanding of contemporary global issues, in many instances demonstrating a grasp of the complexity inherent in modern-day global societies. For example, in one student’s initial essay he identified world hunger as the most pressing global issue today. In his final essay, however, his views had matured to the point that while he still focused on environmental and social issues, he stressed the threat of resource conflicts with compelling evidence from geographical areas such as the Aral Sea in the post-Soviet world or the competing demands on the Nile River.

Still another student went from originally identifying limited resources, particularly oil as the most pressing issue to a final essay in which he developed his own framework. His original thesis of “the consumer domino effect” included not only the problem of shrinking resources but placed it within the larger context of the “voracious appetites for land resources” by industrialized nations. He also included data on those nations that were relying upon the most resources.

Still other students went from recognizing very specific problems such as the threat emanating from a potential nuclear-armed North Korea to more general global ills, such as gendercide and world poverty.

- b. Analysis of findings:

In analyzing these findings, all students demonstrated an enhanced understanding of global issues shown by their ability to move from a very focused, specific approach to contemporary global issues, i.e. single-issue problems to a general, multi-dimensional approach. Global issues became contextualized within a broader framework which will serve them throughout their lives. By broadening the scope from recognizing limited resources as the problem to an understanding of the forces contributing to this resource drain reveals a nuanced understanding to a complex world that was not evident in the initial essays.

5. **What program changes will be made based on the assessment results?**

- a) Describe plans to improve student learning based on assessment findings (e.g., course content, course sequencing, curriculum revision, learning environment or student advising).

The only change I will make is to add a third essay during the course of the quarter. I think I will benefit and can better serve the students if I can ascertain this evolution of a global literacy.

- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.

The third essay will be an in-class essay given mid-term.

6. Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed and an evaluation of the assessment plan/process itself.

I don't see the need for any revisions to the assessment process. The process is valuable for me in that it was one of the best indicators to assess the different levels of incoming students and the evolution of each student in a way that went beyond the formulaic papers and exams.

**NEW: PART II – CLOSING THE LOOP**  
**FOLLOW-UP FROM THE 2011-12 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

In response to the university's accrediting body, the [Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#), this section has been added. This should be viewed as a follow up to the previous year's findings. In other words, begin with findings from 2011-12, and then describe actions taken during 2012-13 to improve student learning along, provide a brief summary of findings, and describe possible next steps.

**Working definition for closing the loop:** *Using assessment results to improve student learning as well as pedagogical practices. This is an essential step in the continuous cycle of assessing student learning. It is the collaborative process through which programs use evidence of student learning to gauge the efficacy of collective educational practices, and to identify and implement strategies for improving student learning.* Adapted 8.21.13 from <http://www.hamline.edu/learning-outcomes/closing-loop.html>.

1. **Student Learning Outcome(s)** assessed for 2011-12
  
2. **Strategies implemented** during 2012-13 to improve student learning, based on findings of the 2011-12 assessment activities.
  
3. **Summary of results** (may include comparative data or narrative; description of changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, etc.): Describe the effect of the changes towards improving student learning and/or the learning environment.
  
4. What **further changes to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery**, etc. are projected based on closing-the-loop data, findings and analysis.

Some elements of this document have been drawn or adapted from the University of Massachusetts' assessment handbook, "Program-Based Review and Assessment: Tools and Techniques for Program Improvement" (2001). Retrieved from [http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online\\_handbooks/program\\_based.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online_handbooks/program_based.pdf)