

September 7, 2016

To: Peter March, Executive Dean
School of Arts and Sciences

Susan Lawrence, Vice Dean for Undergraduate Education
School of Arts and Sciences

Carolyn Moehling, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education
School of Arts and Sciences

From: Gary Gigliotti
Chair, Executive Council on Assessment

Re: Review of the School of Arts and Sciences annual assessment report and the
Core Curriculum assessment report 2016.

Thank you for your 2016 annual assessment reports. The Executive Council on Assessment (ECA) has reviewed the both the Core Curriculum report and the Annual Assessment Report of the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) and our Narrative Responses to these two reports are forwarded with this letter.

The two attached Narrative Responses are laudatory, and justly so. The reviewers note that the assessment programs in SAS, both for the Core Curriculum and for the programs and departments within SAS, are exemplary. In quality, depth and breadth, nothing compares to them in the University.

As I noted last year, it is striking that SAS has created a coherent, sustainable and active assessment culture in the face of such diversity and difference in disciplines and programs. It is striking, too, that there is such depth of faculty involvement in assessment throughout the Core Curriculum and in the departments themselves.

And again this year, I must point out that the leadership shown by SAS in program assessment has been a beacon for other schools within the institution to find their way to create meaningful assessment plans and methods.

Thank you for your commitment, your dedication, your hard work, and your leadership in this area. We are confident that SAS will continue to be the leader in learning outcome assessment throughout New Brunswick and in the University.

Please write to me at gary.gigliotti@ctaar.rutgers.edu or call my office at (848) 932-7466 with any questions you may have.

Gary A. Gigliotti
Associate VP Academic Affairs, Teaching and Assessment
Professor of Economics

Executive Council on Assessment Narrative responses to the Spring 2016 assessment report submitted by:

School: Rutgers – New Brunswick Core Curriculum

Learning Goals: Meets Current ECA Standards

Core learning goals are publicly posted in multiple places and described in a widely-circulated brochure available as a pdf. Links to the Core goals are found on the main SAS Office of Undergraduate Education web page as well as on the main SAS undergraduate Office of Academic Services web page.

Course Syllabi: Meets Current ECA Standards

The faculty Guide to Submitting Courses for Certification for the SAS Core Curriculum, 2016 Edition (<http://tinyurl.com/jgnz78o>) provides information for syllabi development and student learning outcome goals.

Assessment plan structure and process: Meets Current ECA Standards

The Core Requirements Committee (CRC) is an excellent source and model for the entire assessment structure.

Assessment Tools and Measures: Meets Current ECA Standards

The Core Curriculum offerings are assessed using detailed rubrics for the Core's learning goals.

Benchmark/Standards: Meets Current ECA Standards

The CRC asks departments for complete assessment reports on all Core certified courses at three-year intervals. These assessment reports are intended to compile systematic evidence that students are achieving the Core Curriculum goals; identify gaps between the aspirations of the courses and actual student achievement; and provide a trigger for modification or department review of the certified courses and their appropriateness for the Core. The CRC has expressed concern that some courses are reported as having over 75% of students achieving goals at the "outstanding" level. The ECA will be interested to see how the CRC addresses this concern with departments as assessments and procedures are refined for the next cycle.

Assessment Implementation and Results: Meets Current ECA Standards

The CRC requested reports from 210 of the 365 Core courses offered in fall 2015 and 217 of the 390 Core courses offered in spring 2016. The CRC received 375 courses from the departments, which translates to an 88% response rate with combined enrollments of approximately 59,820. Moreover, reflecting the CRC's encouragement of best practices, additional results were voluntarily filed for another 53 courses (14 in fall, 41 in spring) making the combined enrollments of all courses reporting Core goals assessment to 63,130. Sixty-five percent of the submitted reports included plans to make changes to improve student learning or methods to improve the measurement of student learning.

Closing the Loop Activities: Meets Current ECA Standards

The ECA acknowledges the CRC's efforts in closing the loop activities by engaging faculty to continually modify and refine aspects of pedagogy, course design, and assessment based on Core assessment results. . Moreover, the CRC effectively followed through on its policy in which courses previously certified for the Core would be reviewed again if the courses had not been offered in the past three academic years, and large enrollment courses (100+ per semester) with grade distributions that were out of line with expectations for entry-level general education courses. As a result of the review, the CRC retired nine courses from the Core Curriculum effective fall 2016.

General Comments: Meets Current ECA Standards

Overall, the Core Requirement Committee continues to do excellent work by implementing a culture of assessment in the Core curriculum in New Brunswick as well as its certification of all common Core courses offered. The CRC's own reflection on its practices, such as those that led to the creation of the on-line reporting tool, ensures its continued relevance, and the ECA will look forward to the outcome of the work of the Core Evaluation Committee in the coming year.

Summative Evaluation: Meets Current ECA Standards