**Annual Assessment Report for 2020-2021 AY**

Reports completed on assessment activities carried out during the 2020-21 AY will be due September 30th 2021 and must be e-mailed to the Director of Assessment, Dr. Douglas Fraleigh (douglasf@csufresno.edu).

Provide detailed responses for each of the following questions within this word document. Please do NOT insert an index or add formatting. Furthermore, only report on two or three student learning outcomes even if your external accreditor requires you to evaluate four or more outcomes each year. Also be sure to explain or omit specialized or discipline-specific terms.

**Department/Program:** Criminology **Degree:** Master of Science (MS)

**Assessment Coordinator:** Dr. Jordan Pickering (graduate program coordinator)

1. **Please list the learning outcomes you assessed this year:**

**SLO #2**: Students will exhibit information literacy through the mastery of criminological debates in literature reviews of the specified areas of concentration.

**SLO #6**: Students will give class presentations at various points in their programs to demonstrate their competency in oral communication of their evidenced based arguments.

1. **What assignment or survey did you use to assess the outcomes and what method (criteria or rubric) did you use to evaluate the assignment?** **Please describe the assignment and the criteria or rubric used to evaluate the assignment in detail and, if possible, include copies of the assignment and criteria/rubric at the end of this report.**

The graduate students’ oral presentation skills were assessed through direct observation in two graduate elective courses: CRIM 270T (Diversity, Justice, & Social Change) and CRIM 275 (Victimology & Social Change). Students in each of these graduate courses were tasked with giving a professional presentation on a topic of their choosing related to the course, which required them to a) demonstrate informational literacy through published literature related to their chosen topic and b) exhibit their oral communication skills when presenting to the class.

The assignment descriptions provided by the instructors of these courses are below:

Directions for Presentation in CRIM 270T:

As we go through course content, students should be thinking about public perceptions regarding the issues we talk about through the course.  Students will develop at least one research question (you can have a few) to answer through qualitative interviews or quantitative surveys they disseminate through online platforms (Qualtrics or other free site).  Students should be sure to collect demographic characteristics (age, gender, race, etc.) as well in order to have information about your sample.

If you choose to do qualitative interviews, you do not need to necessarily record and transcribe them, although you will want specific quotes to discuss in your presentation.  In addition, while we are not doing a proper research project, you will want to remember that qualitative analysis involves looking for themes in the data.  If you choose a quantitative survey, you do not need to do an interpretive analysis, and will instead focus on a descriptive analysis.  Overachievers can certainly do interpretive analyses if they want, and I am happy to help with that too.

Presentations should be 10-15 minutes in length and include a background (what we know), research questions (what we want to know), methodology, results, limitations, and implications of the research.  Students do not have to make a PowerPoint for the presentation, although I will say that they are helpful for the audience (and take the attention off you a bit while you speak).

Directions for Presentation in CRIM 275:

Each student will be required to select either a class Chapter or select a current event related to victimology and victim assistance give a professional presentation to the class about their chosen Chapter or event/issue and how it relates to topics covered in this course. Students need to select their chapter or topic for presentations within the first two-weeks of the semester. For the purposes of this assignment, a “current” event constitutes as an event related to victimology or victim assistance that has occurred on or after August 1st, 2015. In addition, students will also need to craft at least three questions that relate to their chosen article to pose to the class and facilitate a brief class discussion. Presentations must be done using MSPowerPoint or similar presentation software.

The rubric that was used to assess the two SLOs described above can be found in Appendix A. This rubric, which was created at and published by Purdue University, was chosen because of its comprehensiveness and relevance to the professional presentation skills that students should have at the graduate level. Using this rubric, the coordinator was able to assess:

1. Content: Relevance of the chosen topic (related to the topics covered in the course)
2. Organization/clarity: The student’s presentation was organized in a logical manner and transitions from topic to topic were smooth
3. Grammar/mechanics: The student’s presentation (e.g., PowerPoint) was free of grammatical and mechanical errors and appropriate for a graduate audience
4. Completeness:
5. Documentation: The student provided empirical support when necessary (e.g., presenting on findings from previous studies, demonstrating that the claims he/she is making are empirically supported)
6. Delivery: The student’s oral presentation was delivered at an appropriate pace and volume; the student effectively used visual aids (i.e., PowerPoint)
7. Interactions: The student made eye contact with the audience throughout the presentation and was able to answer questions from the audience

The graduate students’ performance in each of the aforementioned areas were then scored using a scale from one (beginning) to four (mastery). The scale is below:

* Beginning (1)
* Developing (2)
* Proficient (3)
* Mastery (4)

**Benchmark:** The graduate coordinator expected at least 70% of the students who were observed would average proficient (3) or higher across the seven criteria used for the assessment.

* This benchmark was selected based on the student composition of two courses. Most students in these courses were in their second (and final) year in the graduate program, meaning they had time to develop sound oral presentation skills. A few of the students, however, had just started the graduate program, which leaves them with more time to become proficient in these skills prior to graduation.

1. **What did you learn from your analysis of the data? Please include sample size (how many students were evaluated) and indicate how many students (number or percentage instead of a median or mean) were designated as proficient.**

The graduate assessment coordinator chose to conduct observations in the two graduate elective courses in Spring 2021. The first course (CRIM 270T: Diversity, Crime, & Social Change) had 11 students enrolled, while the second course (CRIM 275: Victimology & Social Change) had 10 students enrolled in the course. These courses were chosen for the assessment this year because an oral presentation was a required assignment in the course. The assessment coordinator observed a total of 14 graduate student presentations across these two courses (67% of students). Although the coordinator would have liked a larger sample, these two courses were offered on the same day and time each week, making it impossible to observe both courses each week.

The average score (on a four-point scale) for the 12 graduate students across all seven criteria was 3.2, which is designated as “proficient.” To provide a more detailed assessment of students’ skills, students’ scores were then analyzed by category. The results were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **% of students meeting the benchmark** | **Mastery (4)** | **Proficient (3)** | **Developing (2)** | **Beginning (1)** |
| **Content** | 75% | 25% (n=3) | 50 % (n=6) | 25% (n=3) | 0% (n=0) |
| **Organization/clarity** | 92% | 50% (n=6) | 42% (n=5) | 8% (n=1) | 0% (n=0) |
| **Grammar/mechanics** | 91% | 33% (n=4) | 58% (n=7) | 8% (n=1) | 0% (n=0) |
| **Completeness** | 88% | 33% (n=4) | 50% (n=6) | 17% (n=2) | 0% (n=0) |
| **Documentation** | 67% | 25% (n=3) | 42% (n=5) | 17% (n=2) | 17% (n=2) |
| **Delivery** | 75% | 33% (n=4) | 42% (n=5) | 25% (n=3) | 0% (n=0) |
| **Interactions** | 91% | 58% (n=7) | 33% (n=4) | 8% (n=1) | 0% (n=0) |

The results demonstrate that the benchmark (75% of observed graduate students) was met in all but one of the seven criteria outlined in the rubric. That is, most of the graduate students observed scored a three (“proficient”) or higher when it came to content, organization, grammar and general writing mechanics, level of completeness, delivery, and interactions during their oral presentations. These findings suggest that our graduate students have a solid foundation and the skills necessary to give a professional oral presentation on criminological content.

The graduate assessment coordinator also felt it was important to analyze students’ scores by criteria. The average student scores for each of the six categories were as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Mean Score** |
| Content | 3.0 |
| Organization/clarity | 3.14 |
| Grammar/mechanics | 3.25 |
| Completeness | 3.16 |
| Documentation | 2.75 |
| Delivery | 3.08 |
| Interactions | 3.5 |

The mean scores suggest that students’ strengths were noted in interactions during the presentation, proper grammar and writing mechanics in their PowerPoint presentations, the completeness of their overall presentation, and the organization and clarity they exhibited throughout the presentation. The high average for interactions is particularly noteworthy, given that we were in a virtual teaching environment during the 2020-2021 academic year and, as such, students had to give their presentations via Zoom.

Despite these positive findings, however, there was one particular finding that suggests the need for improvement among our graduate students. Students did not meet the 75% benchmark when it came to correct documentation throughout their presentation. That is, students often failed to cite their sources when necessary. This was primarily evident when they had a slide designated as “Literature Review,” yet failed to include citations at the end of the statements/claims that were contained on this slide. Therefore, moving forward, it is imperative that students are taught to correctly cite their sources not just in writing assignments, but also in professional presentations when necessary (e.g., in PowerPoint or Google Slides).

1. **What changes, if any, do you recommend based on the assessment data?**

There are three primary recommendations that are proposed as a result of the findings from this year’s assessment. First, to ensure that our graduate students continue to develop sound oral communication skills throughout their time in graduate school, faculty who teach in our graduate program should be encouraged to include an oral presentation assignment of some kind in their graduate course. This could be in the form of leading weekly discussion on the assigned readings and/or selecting a topic of interest and giving a presentation on said topic. The graduate coordinator will be sure to reach out to the graduate faculty to discuss this recommendation.

Second, graduate students in our program should be provided with detailed instructions for how to create and give a professional presentation in a format that is consistent across the field of Criminology. Rather than just assume that graduate students know how to give a professional presentation, faculty who require this kind of assignment should provide comprehensive guidance on presentation format and content, with an emphasis on the importance of citations. It may be helpful for faculty to provide students with an example of a professional presentation (e.g., one that they themselves have given at a professional academic conference) so that they can see exactly what is expected of them.

Third, the graduate coordinator hosts professional development meetings for the graduate students each semester and she will be encouraged to use of one of these meetings to review the standards and expectations for professional, academic presentations. These professional development meetings, although informal and voluntary, are designed to give students additional information about academic life that they may not otherwise learn about in their coursework. Such a forum would be a great place to teach students about the format/structure and purpose of an academic presentation, while also emphasizing the qualities and characteristics of a good presentation.

1. **If you recommended any changes in your response to Question 4 in last year’s assessment report, what progress have you made in implementing these changes? If you did not recommend making any changes in last year’s report please write N/A as your answer to this question.**

N/A

1. **What assessment activities will you be conducting during the next academic year?**

The graduate assessment coordinator will be assessing the following SLOs during the 2022-2023 academic year:

**SLO #1**: Students will demonstrate advanced content knowledge in Criminology.

**SLO #3**: Students will perform advanced critical analysis of primary and secondary sources through written assignments in required coursework.

To analyze the aforementioned student learning outcomes, the graduate assessment coordinator will develop two separate rubrics; one designed to assess content proficiency and the other to measure critical thinking/analysis in written responses. The current graduate assessment coordinator will also speak with the former graduate assessment coordinator to discuss how these SLOs were assessed in the past and whether the assessment tools used then can a) continued to be used or b) need to be updated.

1. **Identify and discuss any major issues identified during your last Program Review and in what ways these issues have or have not been addressed.**

**Action 1:** The Department will continue active recruitment of students to the program to sustain and grow enrollment.

* + During the 2020-2021 academic year, the new graduate coordinator worked closely with the department chair and dean of the College of Social Sciences to develop a comprehensive recruitment plan for the graduate program. Not only did this address an issue identified in our most recent program review, but it was also encouraged by our then Provost, now university President.
  + The graduate coordinator is pleased to report that the graduate program saw a 200+% increase in the number of applications it received for Fall 2021 admission.

**Action 2:** The Department will explore alternative modes of teaching, including online and hybrid delivery formats.

* + This item was perhaps unintentionally addressed during the 2020-2021 academic due to the shift to virtual instruction caused by COVID-19. All graduate courses were offered in an online format, which gave students and faculty the opportunity to experience graduate courses via online modalities.
  + The graduate coordinator will continue to communicate with graduate faculty to see whether they are a) open to offering some graduate elective courses online and/or b) willing to consider a fully online graduate program (in addition to a fully in-person program). The department will continue to explore this option, although progress in this direction may be hindered by the size of our full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty (i.e., we do not have enough faculty to accommodate both in-person and online graduate programs)

**Action 3:** The Department will explore the option of offering two tracks (i.e., continuing with our face-to-face program and an applied track more focused on criminal justice issues, through an online delivery mode) for the master’s degree.

* + The department will continue to explore this, however, an attempt to grow our graduate program into a two-track system may be hindered by the size of our faculty (i.e., not enough faculty who are willing to teach in the graduate program, thus preventing us from being able to offer more than one track toward the degree).

**Action 4:** The Department will seek to hire additional tenure-track faculty members.

* + The department was able to hire two tenure-track faculty members during the 2020-2021 academic year.
  + The department also received permission to hire one tenure-track faculty member during the 2021-2022 academic year.

**Action 5:** The Department will continue assessment practices using the rubrics that were implemented in 2017.

* + The current graduate assessment coordinator will work with the former graduate assessment coordinator to ensure that the assessment rubrics that are used are up-to-date, valid, and reliable.

Appendix A

**Department of Criminology Graduate Program Assessment**

Oral Presentation Rubric

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**Observer:**

**Date of observation:**

**Class that was observed:**

**Student presenter:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Beginning (1)** | **Developing (2)** | **Proficient (3)** | **Mastery (4)** |
| **Content:**  Importance of topic, relevance, accuracy of facts, overall treatment of topic | Topic lacks relevant focus; presentation contains multiple fact errors | Topic would benefit from more focus; presentation contains some fact errors or omissions | Topic is adequately focused and relevant; major facts are accurate and generally complete | Topic is narrowly/tightly focused on the topic at hand; presentation contains accurate information and is free from fact errors |
| **Organization/Clarity:**  Appropriate introduction, body, and conclusion; logical ordering of ideas; transitions between major points | Ideas are not presented in proper order; transition is lacking between the major ideas that are presented; several parts of the presentation are wordy and/or unclear | Some ideas are not presented in proper order; transitions are needed between some ideas; some parts of the presentation are wordy and/or unclear | Most ideas presented are in logical order with adequate transitions between most major ideas that are discussed; the presentation is generally clear and understandable | Ideas are presented in a logical order with effective transitions between major ideas; the presentation is clear and concise |
| **Level of Completeness:**  Adequate detail, depth, and appropriate length; adequate background information | Presentation does not provide adequate depth; key details are omitted or underdeveloped; presentation is too short or too long | Additional depth is needed in some places; important information was omitted or not fully developed in the presentation; presentation is too short or too long | Presentation provides adequate depth; few necessary details are omitted; major ideas are adequately developed; the presentation is within the specified length of time | Presentation provides good depth and detail about the subject at hand; the facts presented have adequate background; the presentation is within the specific length of time |
| **Grammar/Mechanics:**  Correct grammar and usage that is appropriate for audience(s) | Presentation contains several major grammar/usage errors; sentences are too long, incomplete, or contain excessive jargon | Presentation may contain some grammar or sentence errors; sentences may contain jargon or are too long or difficult to follow | Presentation has no serious grammar errors; sentences are mostly free of jargon and are complete and understandable | Presentation contains no grammar errors; sentences are free of jargon and are complete and easy to understand |
| **Documentation:**  Proper support and citations for major ideas; may use visual aids that support main argument(s)/message | Little or no message support provided for the major ideas that are presented; visual aids are missing and/or are inadequate; little or no sourcing provided | Some message support provided by facts or visual aids; sourcing may be outdated and/or thin; visual aids need work | Adequate message support provided for key concepts by facts and visual aids; sourcing is generally adequate and current | Effective message support provided in the form of facts and/or visual aids; sourcing is current and supports major ideas addressed in the presentation |
| **Delivery:**  Appropriate pace and volume in speech; enthusiasm/energy; professional personal appearance | Low volume or energy; presentation pace is too slow or fast; poor diction; unprofessional appearance; visual aids poorly used | More volume/energy needed at times; pace too slow or fast; adequate appearance; visual aids could be improved | Adequate volume and energy; generally good pace and diction; professional appearance; visual aids used properly | Good volume and energy; proper pace and diction; professional appearance; visual aids used effectively |
| **Interactions:**  Adequate eye contact with members of the audience; ability to listen to and/or answer questions from audience members | Little or no eye contact with members of the audience; poor listening skills; uneasiness and/or inability to answer questions from audience members | Additional eye contact with audience members needed at times; better listening skills needed; some difficulty answering questions from audience members | Fairly good eye contact with members of the audience; displays ability to listen; provides adequate answers to questions from audience members | Good eye contact with members of the audience; excellent listening skills; answers questions from audience members with confidence and accuracy |

Source: Purdue University. (2021). “College of Science Oral Presentation Rubric.” Retrieved from: <https://studylib.net/doc/13384188/college-of-science-oral->

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