

UT MARTIN ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

MARCH / APRIL 2025

Our most important job is to help our students succeed!

Five Year Program Reviews

All programs on campus that are not otherwise externally accredited are required to complete a program review every five years, as mandated by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. The outline for the self-study, the Quality Assurance Funding rubrics, and all other information related to the review are included on the Accreditation and Assessment website

<https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/accreditation-and-assessment/institutional-assessment/assessment-forms.php> The review requires an external evaluator with experience as a department chair or dean from outside the state of Tennessee and a group of three faculty from our colleges outside the college in which the program resides.

During the month of April, we will be completing the Five-Year Program Reviews for five academic programs: Interdisciplinary Studies, English, Spanish, Mass Media and Strategic Communications, and Agricultural Business.

The programs listed above have each submitted their self-study for review and are currently preparing for the site visit. We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the various faculty members who are serving on these review teams. Serving as a reviewer is an interesting learning experience and a great way to learn more about other programs on our campus.

The programs scheduled for review next year are Biology, Chemistry, and Political Science. If you are interested in serving on one of these review teams next year, please contact Patty Flowers at pflowers@utm.edu

to get your name on the list of potential reviewers.

Five-Year Reviews of General Education

During January and February, the Committee on Instruction conducted the Five-Year Reviews of the General Education courses in the categories of Biological and Physical Systems and Mathematics. All but two of the courses were approved for continuation in these general education categories. Those two were tentatively approved pending alterations to the course syllabi to include the student learning outcomes of the General Education category. Next year the Committee will review the General Education courses in the Communications category.

From Data to Decisions

From **Biology**: “our department established a common core of courses for all biology students several years ago to reduce variability in subject scores and promote exit exam achievement. This appears to have been effective, but we will continue to monitor exit exam performance to ensure that the improvements observed are long lasting. We plan to have a “closing the loop” meeting again this year where faculty will be asked to compare their course content to the “ETS Major Field Test Item Information Report.” We will discuss possible changes that could be implemented to the curriculum or to individual courses to improve our students’ scores further.”

From **MMSC 304** where students are assigned to produce a thirty second TV Commercial: For this assessment, students write and produce a 30-second advertisement or promotion for a local business or organization. As part of the assignment, students are expected to write a

script, storyboard the project, and use the television cameras to shoot and edit the video. This content creation assignment requires students to network with a business, identify their marketing needs, and produce a broadcast ready commercial or PSA for the client.

In **GEO 310**, the benchmark for outcome 3 was not met. Partially contributing to this overall is that many students have had no previous geospatial technology or GIS background, so the analytical aspect is something with which they struggle. Many students are still used to using their portable devices (cell phones, tablets, etc.) over desktop computers. As such, they are used to being able to access information at a moment's notice over retaining/recalling procedures to answer questions. Additional emphasis will be placed on concepts and procedures to demonstrate the methods of analysis from memory instead of simply accessing the information at will from available technology. Modification of this benchmark may be warranted in the future but suggest that it remain in place as is for the immediate future.

For the Health and Human Performance, **K-12 Licensure Program for Physical Education and Health**, the State of Tennessee recently adopted a new PRAXIS exam that is a combined assessment for both Physical Education and Health; whereas this saves the student money to only take one exam, their assessment is now *all-or-none* meaning that they must pass the exam to be licensed to teach in either field. The faculty feel that the PRAXIS exam, in combination with the edTPA will assess content knowledge and teaching skills in health and physical education so that the current assessments can be eliminated. With these changes at the State level and with the PRAXIS exam, the faculty are electing to reword SLO 1 to include physical education allowing for the deletion of SLO 2. The new wording will be: *Demonstrate proficiency with Health and Physical Education as a discipline*. Going forward, this SLO will be assessed by the PRAXIS (5857) exam.

History faculty members met several times during the 2023-24 academic year to discuss ways to improve the quality of HIST 499 capstone papers. The faculty have decided to begin using a second reader for senior capstone papers. The second reader

will be the most appropriate content expert for each student's project. The second reader will help guide student research and provide area-specific feedback on sources, historical context, and analysis.

In addition, all faculty members who teach upper-division history courses now annually participate in assessing HIST 499 capstone papers. That involvement gives history faculty members a clearer sense of both the current quality of HIST 499 capstone papers and the things to emphasize in their classes that will lead to stronger papers in the future.

High Impact Practices

To address the High Impact Practice (HIP) of Capstones and Common Intellectual Experiences, the **MBA Program** "offers a core curriculum that all MBA students take, along with a capstone course required of all MBA students. Also, rubrics for all SLOs are provided online, and utilized throughout the program.... Additionally, MGT 790 students work with businesses as outside consultants. Students work directly with the owners or managers of the business. Students and the business owners agree to the scope of the project and deliverables expected by the business owner at the completion of the project."

Bragging rights

From **AGEC**, "For the AY23-24, we had 15 students compete (with students in the 1st place and 3rd place teams) in the SAEA quiz bowl in Atlanta, GA, and we had 7 students compete in the AAEA Academic Bowl in New Orleans, LA. Dr. Anthony Delmond reconfigured a course to prepare students for national competition – all 15 SAEA competitors were in the class and competed throughout the semester for the 7 spots on the national team. The 2024 UTM Quiz Bowl Team finished 5th nationally at the AAEA national meeting."