

Definition of Unit

School of Interdisciplinary Studies Mission Statement

Reporting Year: 2019

Providing Department:
School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Department/Unit Contact:
Steve Frye

Mission/Vision/Goal Statement:

The School of Interdisciplinary Studies is a university-wide academic unit whose mission is to provide innovative, high quality educational opportunities in response to changing needs of the diverse population within TTU's service area and beyond.

Goal/Objective/Outcome

SoIS Goal 1: Critical Thinking

Define Goal:
Demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in critical thinking and leadership development.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives:

- Interdisciplinary Studies majors will develop critical thinking skills, as measurable through the Senior Exit Exam.

SoIS Goal 2: Integrated learning

Define Goal:
Develop a program of study that integrates learning from two academic emphasis areas, and demonstrates that integration through a senior-level capstone project.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives:

- Each student will develop and complete an interdisciplinary program of study that draws from two academic areas.
- Each student will complete the Culminating Project course during his/her senior year.

SoIS Goal 3: Interdisciplinary Research Project**Define Goal:**

Identify and research a topic from various perspectives, address significant problems that impact a global society, and communicate findings effectively.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives:

- Each student will develop a research paper or project that serves to synthesize concepts from the students' two concentration areas.
- Each student will successfully complete the research paper or project report to an acceptable level, correctly utilizing appropriate academic sources.

Assessment Tools**Assessment: Senior Capstone Project Assessment Rubric****Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:**

Goal 1, Goal 2 (outcome b), Goal 3 (outcomes a, b)

Type of Tool:

Capstone Project

Frequency of Assessment:

Per Semester

Rationale:

The Senior Capstone course is required of all Interdisciplinary Studies majors. Each student must complete either a 6000 word research paper or a real-world project that integrates the two academic concentration areas.

Faculty members complete the rubric on each student that completes the course, entering a score based on the rubric. The scores are combined to get an overall score for each semester's cohort of students.

Data from the rubric is used to assess overall preparedness for the senior project, and student development in research question development, analysis, integration and synthesis of concentration areas, documentation, and critical thinking. Data is also used in program evaluation to assess areas of needed improvement. A score of 2.5 is adequate, 3.0 is considered acceptable, 3.5 advanced, and 4.0 stellar.

Assessment: Senior Exit Exam

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective:

Goal 1

Type of Tool:

Exit Exam

Frequency of Assessment:

Annually

Rationale:

The Senior Exit Exam is administered to every student who graduates from TTU, with the exception of non-traditional students. This assessment evaluates students in the area of critical thinking. Scores are aggregated by major and reported annually. The California Critical Thinking Test is a well-tested measure of critical thinking, and is accepted by the University as a whole. (It must be noted that the exception of Non-traditional student scores is a university policy and not one of the SOIS. The exemption leads to the exclusion of over 40% of our majors from the data. It s our goal to work toward the inclusion of all SOIS students.)

The School of Interdisciplinary Studies uses the Senor Exit Exam to evaluate majors in Critical Thinking. The goal is to have an increasing score in the Exam annually, and to meet or exceed the university average score.

Results: Senior Capstone Project Assessment Results - Fall 2019

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:

Goals 1, 2, and 3

Results:

Faculty members complete the rubric on each student that completes the course, entering a score based on the rubric. The scores are combined to get an overall score for each semester's cohort of students.

Data from the rubric is used to assess overall preparedness for the senior project, and student development in research question development, analysis, integration and synthesis of concentration areas, documentation, and critical thinking. Data is also used in program evaluation to assess areas of needed improvement. A score of 2.5 is adequate, 3.0 is considered acceptable, 3.5 advanced, and 4.0 stellar.

Fall 2018

Area	Thesis/Problem Question	Information Seeking and Evaluating	Selecting Analysis	Synthesis	Documentation	Product Process	Critical thinking
Average Score	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.4

Results: Senior Capstone Project Assessment Results - Spring 2019

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:

Goals 1, 2, and 3

Results:

Spring 2019

Area	Thesis/Problem Question	Information Seeking and Evaluating	Selecting Analysis	Synthesis	Documentation	Product Process	Critical thinking
Average Score	3.5	3.24	3.28	3.40	3.18	3.11	3.56

Results: Senior Exit Exam - 2018-19

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:

Goal 1

Results:

The Senior Exit Exam (California Critical Thinking Test) is administered to every student who graduates from TTU, with the exception of non-traditional students. This assessment evaluates students in the area of critical thinking. Scores are aggregated by major and reported annually. The California Critical Thinking Test is a well-tested measure of critical thinking, and is accepted by the University as a whole. (It must be noted that the exception of Non-traditional student scores is a university policy and not one of the SOIS. The exemption leads to the exclusion of over 40% of our majors from the data. It is our goal to work toward the inclusion of all SOIS students.)

The School of Interdisciplinary Studies uses the Senior Exit Exam to evaluate majors in Critical Thinking. The goal is to have an increasing score in the Exam annually, and to meet or exceed the university average score. In 2018-19 the College of Interdisciplinary Studies average score fell short of the 2017-18 scores and the TTU University average.

	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018		2018-2019	
COLLEGE	Mean	N*	Mean	N*	Mean	N*	Mean	N*	Mean	N*	Mean	N*
Agriculture & Human Sciences	18.3	90	18.2	122	16.8	111	17.1	158	15.0	92	13.9	143
Arts & Sciences	17.4	333	17.8	324	17.5	304	16.2	403	17.5	223	18.3	225
Business	17.8	174	16.7	193	19.9	137	18.7	308	20.0	236	15.1	238
Education	17.3	178	16.8	357	16.3	300	16.8	337	14.7	116	14.7	232
Engineering	18.0	272	17.2	312	16.0	319	16.0	383	20.6	351	20.3	359
Interdisciplinary Studies	16.8	41	16.6	39	17.5	26	17.0	70	15.8	54*	14.7	96*
Nursing	**		18.7	43	15.8	52	21.0	106	17.1	105	16.6	92
TTU Average	17.6	1551	17.7	1410	16.9	1485	17.0	1767	17.6	1259	16.8	1515
CCTST National Average	≈		≈		≈		≈ 16.2		≈ 16.2		≈ 15.4	

New data was made available this year - by Major. The results for the past four years are reported below:

2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
15.2	59	17.0	60	15.1	44	14.6	65

Modifications and Continuing Improvement to Goals/Objectives/Outcomes

Improvement Action: Add an Instructor level faculty member for RELS courses

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number:

Program Changes and Actions due to Results:

In response to increased interest in Religious Studies courses, the SoIS will add an Instructor-level faculty member to teach Sections of Introduction to Religious Studies, and upper division RELS courses.

The Faculty member was hired with an August 1 hire date

Improvement to Assessment Plan

New Improvement to Assessment Plan: Expansion Administration of the Senior Exit Exam

Improvements to Assessment Plan:

Senior Exit Exam. In the past, the exam has only been available to on-campus students, and students who are classified as more "traditional" students. A number of groups were considered "exempt" from the exam, including non-traditional aged students and distance students. The CoIS is a rather unique unit at TTU: we have a much higher percentage of "non-traditional" students than the rest of the University. Non-traditional aged students (25 and above) make up only 9% of the university's undergraduate population, while the CoIS average has remained 45% or above. The SoIS has programs at seven off-campus 2+2 sites that attract non-traditional students, and also offer a fully online undergraduate degree program. These issues have affected completion rates.

In light of this inconsistent completion rate, we have sought to make this exam available to more of our students. In the **Spring 2019 semester**, an online version of this exam became fully available to our students. Also, the CoIS Student Success Center began administering the exam. The goal is to increase the number of Interdisciplinary Studies majors who take the exam in order to attain a fuller picture of our students. We will continue to explore ways to increase completion (possibly connecting the Exit Exam to our required Senior Capstone course).

Results were made available this year by major:

2018-19: Mean: 14.6 n=65 (of 137 graduates) - 47.5% completion rate

2017-18: Mean: 15.1 n=44 (of 157 graduates) - 28% completion rate

2016-17: Mean: 17.0 n=60 (of 114 graduates) - 52.6% completion rate

2015-16: Mean: 15.2 n=59 (of 134 graduates) - 44% completion rate