**Example “Department of Criminology” Assessment Reports (Amanda Udis-Kessler)**

Semester 1 Assessment Report

Program or Department Name: Criminology Date: December 5, 2019

Your Name: Dr. A. Christie Office Phone Number: 389-9999

1. Which learning outcomes (new or previously developed) will your department/program consider during this round of assessment?

Criminology majors can apply their understanding of several criminology paradigms (postmodern, Marxist, feminist, symbolic interactionist) to a situation in which they are interpreting new criminological information. That is, students should be able to take a description of a crime situation (qualitative) or a crime data set (quantitative) and determine how criminologist of different theoretical stripes would make sense of either the situation or the data set to a sufficiently sophisticated degree.

2. Why are these outcomes of interest to your department/program at this time? Please provide some context about your project, including indicating whether the learning outcomes are new.

This capacity represents several smaller learning outcomes that are crucial for students to learn by the time of the capstone in order for a student to have successfully completed the Criminology major. The Department has extensive anecdotal evidence that students are not successful with these outcomes. These are not new learning outcomes, but this is the first time we have done an assessment project using these particular outcomes. We have been discussing student weakness in this area for a couple of years and finally decided to get more information.

3. Is this project building on a previous assessment project? If so, is it a repetition or modification of the earlier project?

This project is not building on a previous assessment project.

4. What information do you need to collect in order to better understand whether students are learning the knowledge and/or skills covered in these learning outcomes?

We need to know whether, given an assignment in which students are provided with descriptions of crimes and abbreviated crime sets, students can describe in some detail how criminologists of different theoretical positions would interpret each situation or data set.

5. When will you gather this information? (If you will not gather the information this coming spring, what is your timetable for gathering it?)

We will gather the information during the senior seminar in block 7, 2020, approximately one block before students present their capstone reports.

6. How will you gather your information?

We will develop an exam that will demonstrate how well different aspects of theory application are being learned and whether there is any clear way to tease apart the theories or theory elements that are easier or harder for students so that the Department can modify its pedagogical approach to the material, change the curricular coverage, or both. (We will also ask some questions intended to get at student self-understanding regarding how good they are at applying criminological theory.)

7. How much information will you collect? Will you have enough information to look for patterns in student learning?

Twelve students are enrolled in the course and we believe all 12 will give us permission to keep copies of the exam for assessment purposes. While this is not an ideal number of students with regard to looking for patterns, the department generally has ten to fifteen graduating majors a year and we believe that the senior seminar is the best place to determine how well students are developing the skills of interest. We will likely continue with this project over future assessment cycles in order to collect more information. We see this first cycle as exploratory and will try to use whatever we find.

8. Is there anything the assessment committee can do for your department as you start this new project? Can we help with ideas for learning outcomes or assignments, support with rubric design, or anything else?

We would like to run the exam and rubric we have developed by you and see whether you have suggestions. Otherwise, we think we are in good shape.

9. Who will be the representative for your department/program during Semester 2 of this assessment cycle?

I will continue to be the representative.

Semester 2

Program or Department Name: Criminology Date: May 10, 2020

Your Name: Dr. A. Christie Office Phone Number: 389-9999

1. So that the committee can read this document independently of the last report, please tell us what learning outcome(s) you are assessing.

Criminology majors can apply their understanding of several criminology paradigms (postmodern, Marxist, feminist, symbolic interactionist) to a situation in which they are interpreting new criminological information.

2. Were you able to carry out the assessment project you described in your semester 1 report? Did your assessment project change in any way from what you intended?

We were able to carry out the assessment project exactly as described last semester.

3. How exactly did you gather the information? What kind of assignments, rubrics, or other assessment tools did you use?

We gave an exam to our senior majors during our block 7 senior seminar. We used the rubric that your committee helped us to develop early in block 6.

4. Did you gather enough information to assess learning of the desired outcomes? If not, is there a way to supplement the information you have?

As mentioned last semester, we only have 12 senior majors this year. We know that it would be better if we had more students undergo this assessment process but since we see this as an exploratory project, we are willing to live with the tentativeness of our findings.

5. Who will be the assessment representative for your program or department during Year 2 of the assessment cycle?

I will continue on as the assessment representative.

6. Would you or someone in your department like to serve on the Assessment Committee? If so, please let us know.

Dr. S. Holmes has indicated potential interest in serving on the committee. You should contact him directly.

7. Please attach all assignments, rubrics, and other assessment tools to this report. [required] Please check the following boxes as appropriate. I am attaching one or more:

\_\_ Assignments \_\_ Rubrics \_\_ Other assessment tools (please describe)

[not included, as the point of this document is to provide a model for report writing]

Year 2

Program or Department Name: Criminology Date: March 31, 2021

Your Name: Dr. A. Christie Office Phone Number: 389-9999

1. So that the committee can read this document independently of earlier reports, please tell us what learning outcome(s) you are assessing.

Criminology majors can apply their understanding of several criminology paradigms (postmodern, Marxist, feminist, symbolic interactionist) to a situation in which they are interpreting new criminological information.

2. What percentage of students fulfilled each learning outcome you considered?

One-sixth of the students (16.7%) applied all four theories with what we would consider sufficient proficiency; more detailed breakdowns are as follows:

* 70% successfully applied symbolic interactionist theory to the crime situation
* 25% successfully applied symbolic interactionist theory to the data set
* 30% successfully applied postmodern theory to the crime situation
* 15% successfully applied postmodern theory to the data set
* 77% successfully applied Marxist theory to the crime situation
* 72% successfully applied Marxist theory to the data set
* 75% successfully applied feminist theory to the crime situation
* 68% successfully applied feminist theory to the data set

3. Were there any student demographic patterns (gender, ethnicity, major/non-major, year, etc.) in which particular groups of students were more or less successful in meeting the learning objectives? If so, what do these patterns tell you?

All students were seniors. This year, nine students were white and three were African American; eight were male and four were female. There were no notable demographic differences in how students performed on this assessment.

4. All in all, was your original question answered by your findings?

Yes, absolutely. Not only do we now have information to back up our long-standing intuitions, we used the exam to ask the students where the relevant material was covered, and it turned out that all the material was covered only in the one theory course, which is taught differently by different professors.

5. Can you identify any departmental /program changes (curricular, pedagogical, other) that might improve student learning in the area of assessment focus?

After some discussion we have decided to implement the following changes:

* We have found a textbook that, while not particularly weaker in Marxist or feminist theory, looks more productive in teaching students how to both understand and apply postmodern and symbolic interactionist criminology; all of us teaching the theory class will use this book and in the same way.
* We have located a book on applying criminological theory with different chapters on different theories. We will assign several chapters from this book in the theory course.
* We have identified two 300-level courses and one 200-level course where we can introduce criminological theory. Professors teaching those courses have committed to developing lectures, finding introductory reading materials, and creating at least one assignment per course.

We will carry out the same assessment project on the next cycle to see whether these changes have any impact.

6. When and how are you planning to put these changes into effect?

Next year’s theory class is in the fall, and we will institute changes relevant to that class immediately. We will make the changes to the three other courses starting in the fall, when the first course is offered, and continuing in the spring. We are having a syllabus-writing retreat late this summer to incorporate the new material.

7. Have you learned anything else from this process not covered by the above questions?

No, but we think the above gives us plenty to work with.

8. Colorado College seeks to support assessment that is meaningful, manageable, and measurable (or demonstrable). Would you say your process during this assessment cycle has met these goals? If so, what about the process enabled it to succeed? If your process did not meet these goals, why not?

Yes, this process was meaningful, manageable, and measurable. But it would not have been so if our entire department had not been on board. We wish we could convince departments where only a single person does all the assessment work that it is, surprisingly, easier when we all do a small piece of it.

9. What have you found unnecessarily challenging about the assessment process that we might be able to address? Please bear in mind that the committee cannot exempt departments from carrying out direct assessment of student learning, as this is mandated by our accrediting body.

Nothing, but if we had not had an issue of genuine concern ready to go, we might have found it challenging to come up with something meaningful. We would encourage the Committee to do more work with departments helping them think about meaningful assessment as that is relevant to them specifically.

10. Is there anything else the College can do to support you in your assessment work?

We hope that other departments will become more willing to share more of their assessment tools in case we can all be of more use to one another. We think that the rubric the Committee helped us develop could be useful to other social science departments if modified.

11. Would you or someone in your department like to serve on the Assessment Committee?

Dr. S. Holmes is currently serving on the committee. He is willing to chair the committee next year.

12. Who will be the assessment representative for your department during Semester 1 of the next assessment cycle?

I will remain the representative for the time being.

13. Would you be willing to share your assessment reports with other departments that might find them helpful?

We need to talk about sharing the reports themselves, but we would love to share the rubric that you helped us develop. We think other social science departments could modify it in ways that would help them. Also, please communicate to other departments that even though we are not sure about making our assessment reports completely public, we might share them with reps from one or two particular departments, depending on who they are.