**SLO7 Oral Communications Report**  
**2013_14**

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<th>College</th>
<th>College of Sciences and Mathematics</th>
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<td>Department</td>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
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<td>Representative</td>
<td>Robert Boyd</td>
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1. **Name(s) and Number(s) of Course being assessed for Oral Communication: (e.g. ENGL 4444; Capstone in Literature)**
   
   BIOL 4950 Undergraduate Seminar

2. **Number of Students enrolled per year AND number of those students whose work was assessed for oral communication (SLO 7) competency:**
   
   Total enrollment 76. Data assessed for 30.

3. **Assessment Method(s): Explain how assessment for this SLO - not grading for the course as a whole-was conducted. You may cut/paste rubrics for inclusion here, identify faculty reviewing committees, or identify specific kinds of test questions important to your method.)**
   
   BIOL 4950 Undergraduate Seminar is a required course for all students majoring in one of the undergraduate degree programs administered by the Department of Biological Sciences. The course is taught both Fall and Spring semesters and has 18 or fewer students/section. We offer four sections per semester and typically most students in a section are in the same major and are juniors or seniors. The purpose of BIOL 4950 is to provide experience in the professional written and oral communication genres used in the biological sciences. For the oral communication experience students present scientific papers using PowerPoint in a format typical of that used at professional scientific meetings. A rubric common to all sections is used by the instructor to assess each student’s presentation. This rubric addresses the first, third and fourth skills listed under SLO 7.

4. **If the Assessment methods differ from those initially proposed to the CCGEC, identify the differences and explain the rationale for those changes:**
   
   They did not differ.

   **Attachment File Name:** SLO7-BIOL_4950report2013-2014tables.docx

5. **Based on the comprehensive rubric for the appropriate SLO7, indicate the extent of competency of the average student who has completed this course:**
   
   advanced ability

6. **Findings: (what add assessment data tell you about student proficiency in this outcome?)**
   
   On September 19th 2014, three of the instructors who taught BIOL 4950 in the 2013-2014 academic year met to summarize and review the data. Along with data submitted by other instructors, results from the assessment of 30 students were considered. To assess students in the context of the SLO7 rubric, the skills evaluated in the BIOL 4950 Oral Presentation rubric were matched to the skills listed in the SLO7 rubric (see Table 1 in attachment as report data). Then, the number of students attaining each level of accomplishment was summed (Table 1). Two skills from the BIOL 4950 rubric were matched to the first skill listed on the SLO7 rubric and the mean was used for further analysis (see Table 2 in attachment as report data). Finally, to determine the extent of competency of the average student using the comprehensive rubric for SLO 7, the average score for each of the three skills was determined. It was decided that each of these skills should count equally towards overall competency (Table 2). Based on these findings, the extent of competency of the average student is “advanced.” Most students exceeded our standards in all three of the skills. In addition, very few students demonstrated a “basic” level of mastery, and no students demonstrated a general lack of competence in SLO 7 skills (i.e., did not meet the standard).
How did you (or will you) use the findings for improvement? (What questions /issues/concerns did your data raise for the faculty teaching the course? What discussion did the faculty have about the findings? What future actions to improve student attainment of this outcome will the department / program take as a result of this

At the September 2014 meeting of 4950 faculty there was discussion of student strengths and weaknesses. Strengths include a relatively high general competency of students for the major tasks involved in this course. Weaknesses included students who have trouble thinking thematically, and need for students to improve their information literacy skills. The above results will be shared with departmental faculty at an Assessment Mini-Retreat to be held Oct. 16, 2014.

Additional Comments: (What else would you like the Committee to know about your assessment of this course or plans for the future?)

Committee Comments