



University of Pittsburgh

Assessing Student Learning and Re- Accreditation: 2012

Presentation to the Faculty Assembly
April 5, 2011

Patricia E. Beeson

Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor





Assessing Student Learning at Pitt

History:

- Outgrowth of Program Reviews
- Professional Programs – early start
- University-wide process formalized 2006-07
- Initial plans submitted Spring 2007
- First round of results Spring 2008



National Issues:

- Transparency
- Accountability

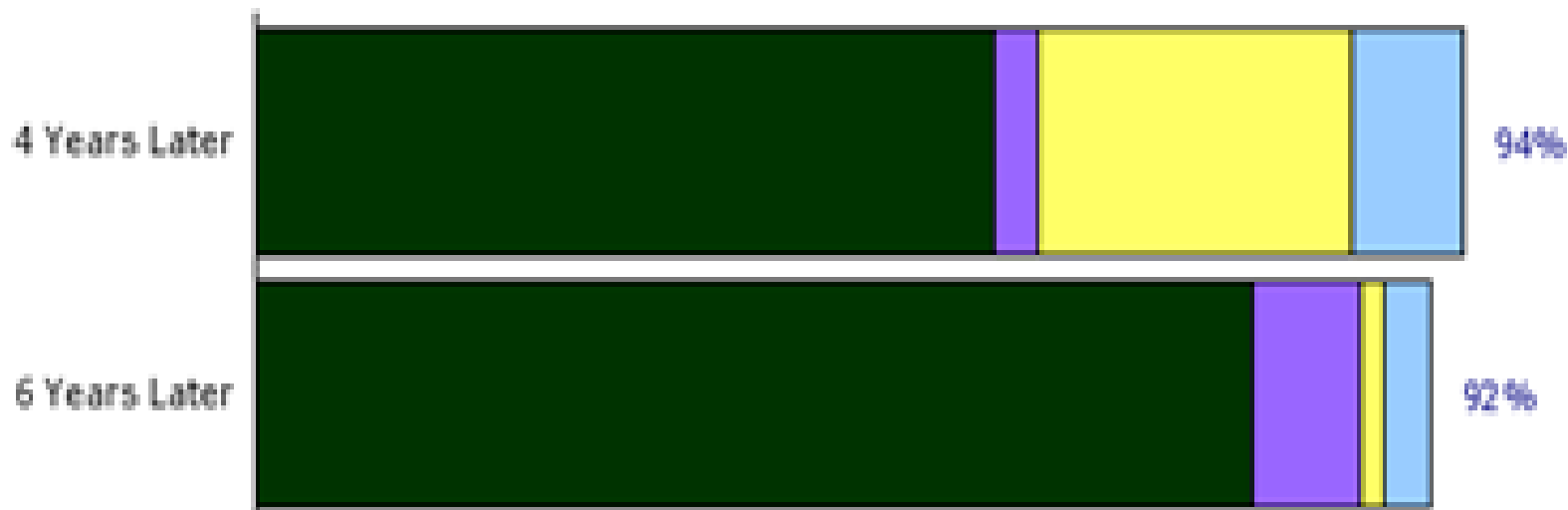




UNDERGRADUATE SUCCESS AND PROGRESS RATE

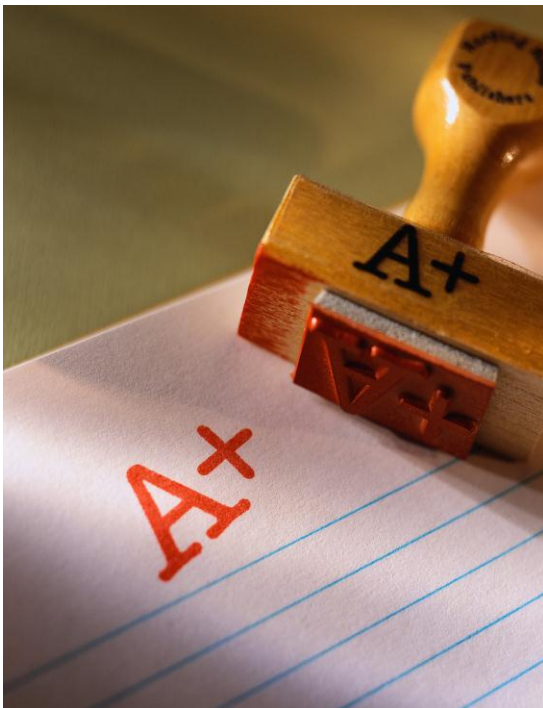


First Time Full-Time Students





Assessing Student learning at Pitt



- ***Faculty Driven***
- ***Comprehensive*** – all degree and certificate granting programs
- ***Meaningful*** – results used to drive curricular improvements



For each academic program:

Expected learning outcomes are clearly articulated, and there is appropriate *faculty involvement*.

Appropriate measures of student learning, including *direct evidence*, are collected.

Targets/benchmarks are established and *appropriately rigorous*.

Results are used to *improve* teaching, and to inform planning and budgeting



Curricular Improvements – A&S

New Major: B.S. in Political Science

Revised Majors:

- **Chinese,**
- **History,**
- **History of Art and Architecture,**
- **Psychology, Theater Arts,**
- **English (Non Fiction Writing Track), and**
- **Actuarial Mathematics**



Documentation

ASSESSMENT MATRIX



PROGRAM OR SCHOOL			
Assessment Coordinator for Program or School	Name:	Email:	Phone:
Program or School Mission Statement			
Program or School Goals			

Learning Outcomes <i>What will students know and be able to do when they graduate?</i>	Assessment Methods <i>How will the outcome be measured? Who will be assessed, when, and how often?</i>	Standards of Comparison <i>How well should students be able to do on the assessment?</i>	Interpretation of Results <i>What do the data show?</i>	Use of Results /Action Plan <i>Who reviewed the finding? What changes were made after reviewing the results?</i>
1.				
2.				
3.				

PROGRAM OR SCHOOL	PhD program, Department of History		
Assessment Coordinator for Program or School	Name: Lara Putnam	Email: LEP12@pitt.edu	Phone: 8-7456
Program or School Mission Statement	To educate students to research and analyze historical change and to make significant original contributions to scholarly knowledge of the human past by writing book-length dissertations that illuminate major historical questions through the use of primary sources.		
Program or School Goals	To enable students to achieve proficiency in appropriate research methods and mastery of the historical literature on selected geographical areas and transnational themes, in order to produce a significant and original book-length dissertation that answers major historical questions through the use of primary sources, and is of potentially publishable quality.		

Learning Outcomes <i>What will students know and be able to do when they graduate?</i>	Assessment Methods <i>How will the outcome be measured? Who will be assessed, when, and how often?</i>	Standards of Comparison <i>How well should students be able to do on the assessment?</i>	Interpretation of Results <i>What do the data show?</i>	Use of Results/Action Plan <i>Who reviewed the finding? What changes were made after reviewing the results?</i>
1. Students will acquire expert knowledge about historical processes in a specific region of the world. They will master a field of scholarship related to their region of interest.	This knowledge is targeted in one of the three fields examined in the comprehensive examinations. A committee of three faculty members will assess a sample of 10 regional field comprehensive exam essays. This assessment will be carried out in spring 2008 and every three years thereafter.	Students' breadth and depth of knowledge of historical processes will be judged on a scale of Competent, Proficient, and Exceptional. 80% of papers will be judged to demonstrate Proficient knowledge.	Eight exams—the totality of those presented since written comprehensive essays were instituted as part of our graduate program reform several years ago—were evaluated. 100% were assessed as demonstrating at least Proficient knowledge; only one was judged to be Exceptional.	The data were presented to the Graduate Committee along with the list of standards created by the Graduate Assessment Committee in order to evaluate the essays. The data will inform the Graduate Committee's ongoing deliberations over how to ensure both equity and excellence across the multiple regional subfields in the graduate program. The Graduate Committee may also circulate the standards developed as part of this exercise among faculty and students as a spur to collective dialogue regarding the goals of the comprehensive exam essays.
2. Students will be able to analyze events and processes in a transnational historical context: as part of global movements of ideas, people, and commodities or as examples of patterned socio-cultural interactions. They will master a field of scholarship related to a comparative or connective theme of interest.	This ability is targeted in one of the three fields examined in the comprehensive examinations. A committee of three faculty members will assess a sample of 10 thematic field comprehensive exam essays. This assessment will be carried out in spring 2009 and every three years thereafter.	Students' ability to analyze events or processes in transnational (comparative or connective) context will be judged on a scale of Competent, Proficient, and Exceptional. 80% of papers will be judged to demonstrate Proficient ability.	To be conducted Spring 2009.	N/A

Learning Outcomes <i>What will students know and be able to do when they graduate?</i>	Assessment Methods <i>How will the outcome be measured? Who will be assessed, when, and how often?</i>	Standards of Comparison <i>How well should students be able to do on the assessment?</i>	Interpretation of Results <i>What do the data show?</i>	Use of Results/Action Plan <i>Who reviewed the findings? What changes were made after reviewing the results?</i>
3. Students will define a significant topic of historical inquiry, conduct research in primary sources using appropriate methodologies, and write a book-length argument-driven thesis that represents a significant and original contribution to the existing scholarship.	The department will compile data on graduate publications on a bi-annual basis. This assessment will be carried out in fall 2008 and every other year thereafter.	80% of students will publish material from their dissertations in peer-reviewed book or article form within six years of receipt of the PhD.	To be conducted Fall 2008.	N/A
4. Students will be well prepared to teach history at the two-year college, four-year college, or university level. They will be competitive on the academic job market.	The department will compile data on graduate placement on an annual basis.	The percentage of our graduates attaining full-time, multi-year teaching positions within three years of graduation will equal or surpass the current rate of placement of graduates of "top tier" History Ph.D. programs as reported by the American Historical Association. ¹	Of the 18 students who graduated with a PhD from our department between 2001 and 2004, 8 (44%) have attained full-time, tenure-track positions. Of 13 students who received their PhDs within the past three years (in 2005, 2006, or 2007), 9 (69%) have already attained full-time, tenure-track positions. The first figure matches overall placement rates for the top 30 History PhD programs in the United States as reported by the American Historical Association, while the second figure notably surpasses the top-tier average.	These findings were reported to the Graduate Committee. The Committee interprets these figures to suggest that our department's graduate curriculum reform (began in 2002) and the new procedures put in place to ensure that students receive the support and feedback they need to move expeditiously through the program have had a positive impact and should be continued.

¹ The most recent survey, conducted in 2005 and encompassing more than 11,000 History Ph.D.s, found that combined placement rates for the top 30 programs in the country had remained steady for all cohorts since 1990, with 41% to 43% of each cohort of top-tier graduates attaining employment in History Departments. By contrast, placement rates for mid-tier and bottom-tier programs ranged from 33% to 20%.
<http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/Issues/2005/0501/0501new1.cfm>

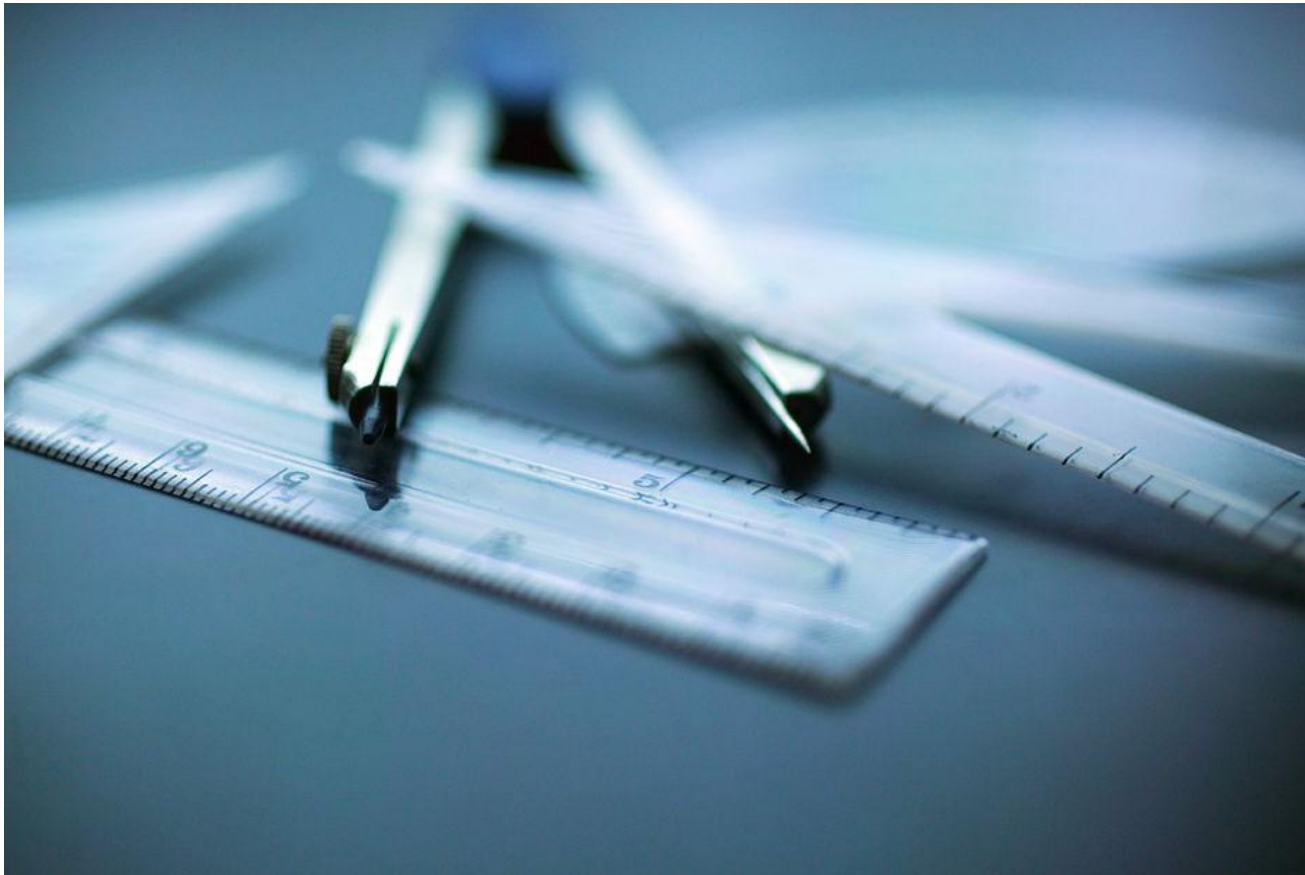


- Freshman Survey (1981 - 2010)
- Student Satisfaction Survey (1997 – 2010)
- Senior Survey (1992 – 2010)
- SERU Survey (2009 – 2010)
- Post-Graduation Survey (2004 – 2010)
- Alumni Survey (97, 00, 08, 09, 10)



University of Pittsburgh

Accreditation 2012





Accredited by Middle States Commission on
Higher Education since 1921

Purpose of Accreditation

- *ensure the quality*
- *promote improvement through peer review*
- ***reduce government regulation through self regulation***



Standards for Accreditation

Institutional Context:

- *Mission and Goals*
- *Budget, Planning, and Resources*
- *Leadership/Administration*



Standards for Accreditation

Institutional Context:

- *Mission and Goals*
- *Budget, Planning, and Resources*
- *Leadership/Administration*

Educational Effectiveness:

- *Faculty and Academic Programs*
- *Admission, Retention, Support Services*



Standards for Accreditation

Assessment:

- *Institutional Effectiveness*
- *Assessment of Student Learning*



Decennial Review: Selected Topics

Self Study:

- *Assessment*

Document Review:

- *Institutional Context*
- *Educational Context*



Timeline

Fall 2009-Summer 2010: *Preparations*

Fall 2010-Spring 2011: *Working Groups convene and develop Self-Study*

Summer 2011: *Draft Self-Study*

Fall 2011: *Institutional review of Self-Study*

Dec.- Jan. 2012: *Generalist reviewers*

March 2012: *Site visit*



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Questions?

