1. Program Learning Outcomes Assessed in AY 2008-09
For the academic year 2008-09, the Liberal Studies Program completed an assessment of program learning outcome number one: Students will develop effective written communication skills.

2. Methodologies Used to Assess Program Learning Outcome
   a. Measures

   Program Learning Outcome #1 was assessed directly in the Spring 2009 semester. The direct assessment was completed using a rubric to review a signature assignment in Liberal Studies (LBST) 110 - California Studies from 17 randomly selected students. The signature assignment was completed by students during May 2009. The assessment rubric for this outcome was developed by adapting a publicly available rubric based on input from the California Studies instructor, the Director of Liberal Studies and the Liberal Studies Faculty Council. The review of the signature writing assignment was performed by the instructor of the LBST 110 course and the Director of Liberal Studies (the only full time faculty member in the program). The Rubric on written communication was designed to look at the following components:

   Definition
   Effective writing conveys information or argues a point of view using organizational structures, supporting materials, and language appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience.

   Student Learning Outcomes
   Students should be able to:
   1. Tailor writing to a specific audience
   2. Focus writing on a specific purpose
   3. Produce logical, coherent, and well-structured writing
   4. Apply appropriate writing standards

   b. Findings

   The direct assessment of Program Learning Outcome # 1 reveals strengths as well as areas requiring improvement. Specific elements related to how effective the Liberal Studies Program prepares students in the area of written communication. Table 1 represents the percentage of scores in each area of the writing rubric. Scores of 17 student signature assignment papers were used to assess effective writing.
### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES)</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tailor writing to a specific audience</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus writing on a specific purpose</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce logical, coherent, and well structured writing</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply appropriate writing standards</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**c. Areas in which students are achieving expectations**

All areas of writing were found to be at a high level during this evaluation. It was found that Liberal Studies students are highly competent in tailoring writing to a specific audience. 76% of the student scores were at or above the median score of the rubric (3) in this area. The highest area of evaluation was on “focus writing on a specific purpose.” Student writing reflects that 94% of the samples were scored above the median score of 3. The ability to produce logical, coherent, and well structured writing was also a relatively high score with 88% of students scoring a 3 or above. Finally the ability to apply appropriate writing standards found 76% of students scoring 3 or above.

**d. Areas in which improvement are needed**

The two lowest areas are “tailoring writing to a specific audience,” and “apply appropriate writing standards.” These two areas of writing were still scored at a 76% passage rate of a score at least 3 or above. Since the passage rate for the Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE) average 70% for the first time test taker passage and the SSIS scores are 76% for native students and 72% for transfer students, the passage rate on the various aspect of this signature assignment or equal to or higher than the WPE scores for the college and higher than the university as a whole. While these scores are not equivalent to the WPE scores, the current area of assessment and the WPE can give an overall view of the effectiveness of writing among Liberal Studies majors.

### 3. Anticipated Program Changes

**a. Description of proposed changes**

These results were reviewed by the Liberal Studies Faculty Council. No immediate program changes were recommended by faculty as a result of this assessment device since results were very positive. The discussion included the possible inclusion of more faculty members in the assessment process. Another recommended change to the program was to create a capstone course where assessment and signature assignments
could be more readily controlled. During the 2009-10 academic year the Liberal Studies Faculty Council will review the format for a capstone course.

b. Determination of future achievement of results
Since this was the initial year of assessment of writing, the decision was to continue to evaluate this area for the next academic year to provide an assessment with some longitudinal context. The hope is that students would continue to achieve at the current level of achievement in all areas of writing.

4. Other Assessment Activities Completed in AY 2008-09
Student data for the California Subject Examination for Teacher (CSET) was reviewed. The past practice was discussed of comparing eventual passage rate of scores with single setting data for the state. Since this assessment plan did not seem to compare like data it was decided to discontinue this assessment plan. The eventual passage rate continues to be approximately 98% of Liberal Studies major eventually take and pass all areas of CSET. This is higher than any other major on campus, but is not surprising since the Liberal Studies major is the likely undergraduate major of choice for those student who have decided to be elementary school teachers

5. Planned Assessment Activities
A second year of writing assessment is planned for the 2009-2010 academic year with great faculty support. This will allow longitudinal look at student writing.

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