2015-2016
Annual Assessment Report Template

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or **contact us** for more help.

Report: BA Geography

Question 1: Program Learning Outcomes

Q1.1.
Which of the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Sac State Baccalaureate Learning Goals (BLGs) **did you assess?** [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. Critical Thinking
- ☐ 2. Information Literacy
- ☐ 3. Written Communication
- ☐ 4. Oral Communication
- ☐ 5. Quantitative Literacy
- ☐ 6. Inquiry and Analysis
- ☐ 7. Creative Thinking
- ☐ 8. Reading
- ☐ 9. Team Work
- ☐ 10. Problem Solving
- ☐ 11. Civic Knowledge and Engagement
- ☐ 12. Intercultural Knowledge and Competency
- ☐ 13. Ethical Reasoning
- ☐ 14. Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning
- ☐ 15. Global Learning
- ☐ 16. Integrative and Applied Learning
- ☐ 17. Overall Competencies for GE Knowledge
- ☐ 18. Overall Competencies in the Major/Discipline
- ☐ 19. Other, specify any assessed PLOs not included above:

a.
b.
c.

Q1.2.
Please provide more detailed background information about **EACH PLO** you checked above and other information such as how your specific PLOs are **explicitly** linked to the Sac State BLGs:

This year, Geography's annual assessment report takes an unusual and uncommon turn. It does not focus on one or more of our PLOs, but turns its attention to one of our concentrations: Human Geography. An indirect finding of our past two annual assessment reports indicates that we may have a problem with graduation rates for our human geography concentration. At any time, the numbers of majors that claim the Human Geography concentration are decent, but something may be happening as those majors approach graduation. The number of Human Geography graduates seems low. This assessment report attempts to determine if we really do have a problem with getting students through our Human Geography concentration, and, if so, what is the extent of the problem. Our assessment report is attached, and it includes data collection (direct measures) and analysis. Please see Question 6 for more information and the report.

Q1.2.1.
Do you have rubrics for your PLOs?

- (●) 1. Yes, for all PLOs
- ( ) 2. Yes, but for some PLOs
- ( ) 3. No rubrics for PLOs
- ( ) 4. N/A
- ( ) 5. Other, specify:

Q1.3.
Are your PLOs closely aligned with the mission of the university?

- (●) 1. Yes
- ( ) 2. No
- ( ) 3. Don't know

Q1.4.
Is your program externally accredited (other than through WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC))?

- ( ) 1. Yes
- (●) 2. No (skip to **Q1.5**)
- ( ) 3. Don't know (skip to **Q1.5**)

Q1.4.1.
If the answer to Q1.4 is **yes**, are your PLOs closely aligned with the mission/goals/outcomes of the accreditation agency?

- ( ) 1. Yes
- ( ) 2. No
- ( ) 3. Don't know

Q1.5.
Did your program use the *Degree Qualification Profile* (DQP) to develop your PLO(s)?

- ( ) 1. Yes
- (●) 2. No, but I know what the DQP is
- ( ) 3. No, I don't know what the DQP is
- ( ) 4. Don't know

Q1.6.
Did you use action verbs to make each PLO measurable?

- (●) 1. Yes
- ( ) 2. No
- ( ) 3. Don't know

(**Remember**: Save your progress)

Question 2: Standard of Performance for the Selected PLO

Q2.1.
Select **ONE(1)** PLO here as an example to illustrate how you conducted assessment (be sure you *checked the correct box* for this PLO in Q1.1):

Select PLO from list

Q2.1.1.
Please provide more background information about the **specific PLO** you've chosen in Q2.1.

Q2.2.
Has the program developed or adopted **explicit** standards of performance for this PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No
- ○ 3. Don't know
- ○ 4. N/A

Q2.3.
Please **provide the rubric(s)** and **standards of performance** that you have developed for this PLO here or in the appendix.

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Q2.4. PLO	Q2.5. Stdrd	Q2.6. Rubric	Please indicate where you have published the **PLO**, the **standard** of performance, and the **rubric** that was used to measure the PLO:
☐	☐	☐	1. In **SOME** course syllabi/assignments in the program that address the PLO
☐	☐	☐	2. In **ALL** course syllabi/assignments in the program that address the PLO
☐	☐	☐	3. In the student handbook/advising handbook
☐	☐	☐	4. In the university catalogue
☐	☐	☐	5. On the academic unit website or in newsletters
☐	☐	☐	6. In the assessment or program review reports, plans, resources, or activities
☐	☐	☐	7. In new course proposal forms in the department/college/university
☐	☐	☐	8. In the department/college/university's strategic plans and other planning documents
☐	☐	☐	9. In the department/college/university's budget plans and other resource allocation documents
☐	☐	☐	10. Other, specify:

Question 3: Data Collection Methods and Evaluation of Data Quality for the Selected PLO

Q3.1.
Was assessment data/evidence **collected** for the selected PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No (skip to **Q6**)
- ○ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q6**)
- ○ 4. N/A (skip to **Q6**)

Q3.1.1.
How many assessment tools/methods/measures **in total** did you use to assess this PLO?

Don't know

Q3.2.
Was the data **scored/evaluated** for this PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No (skip to **Q6**)
- ○ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q6**)
- ○ 4. N/A (skip to **Q6**)

Q3.2.1.
Please describe how you collected the assessment data for the selected PLO. For example, in what course(s) or by what means were data collected:

(**Remember**: Save your progress)

Question 3A: Direct Measures (key assignments, projects, portfolios, etc.)

Q3.3.
Were direct measures (key assignments, projects, portfolios, course work, student tests, etc.) used to assess this PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No (skip to **Q3.7**)
- ○ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q3.7**)

Q3.3.1.
Which of the following direct measures were used? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. Capstone project (e.g. theses, senior theses), courses, or experiences
- ☐ 2. Key assignments from required classes in the program
- ☐ 3. Key assignments from elective classes
- ☐ 4. Classroom based performance assessment such as simulations, comprehensive exams, or critiques
- ☐ 5. External performance assessments such as internships or other community-based projects

☐ 6. E-Portfolios

☐ 7. Other Portfolios

☐ 8. Other, specify:

Q3.3.2.
Please **explain** and **attach** the direct measure you used to collect data:

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Q3.4.
What tool was used to evaluate the data?

○ 1. **No** rubric is used to interpret the evidence (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)

○ 2. Used rubric developed/modified by the faculty who teaches the class (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)

○ 3. Used rubric developed/modified by a group of faculty (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)

○ 4. Used rubric pilot-tested and refined by a group of faculty (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)

○ 5. The VALUE rubric(s) (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)

○ 6. Modified VALUE rubric(s) (skip to **Q3.4.2.**)

○ 7. Used other means (Answer **Q3.4.1.**)

Q3.4.1.
If you used other means, which of the following measures was used? [**Check all that apply**]

☐ 1. National disciplinary exams or state/professional licensure exams (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)

☐ 2. General knowledge and skills measures (e.g. CLA, ETS PP, etc.) (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)

☐ 3. Other standardized knowledge and skill exams (e.g. ETC, GRE, etc.) (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)

☐ 4. Other, specify: (skip to **Q3.4.4.**)

Q3.4.2.
Was the **rubric** aligned directly and explicitly **with the PLO**?

○ 1. Yes

○ 2. No

○ 3. Don't know

○ 4. N/A

Q3.4.3.
Was the **direct measure** (e.g. assignment, thesis, etc.) aligned directly and explicitly **with the rubric**?

○ 1. Yes

○ 2. No

○ 3. Don't know

○ 4. N/A

Q3.4.4.
Was the **direct measure** (e.g. assignment, thesis, etc.) aligned directly and explicitly **with the PLO**?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. N/A

Q3.5.
How many faculty members participated in planning the assessment data **collection** of the selected PLO?

Q3.5.1.
How many faculty members participated in the **evaluation** of the assessment data for the selected PLO?

Q3.5.2.
If the data was evaluated by multiple scorers, was there a norming process (a procedure to make sure everyone was scoring similarly)?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. N/A

Q3.6.
How did you **select** the sample of student work (papers, projects, portfolios, etc.)?

Q3.6.1.
How did you **decide** how many samples of student work to review?

Q3.6.2.

How many students were in the class or program?

Q3.6.3.
How many samples of student work did you evaluated?

Q3.6.4.
Was the sample size of student work for the direct measure adequate?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No
- ○ 3. Don't know

(**Remember**: Save your progress)

Question 3B: Indirect Measures (surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.)

Q3.7.
Were indirect measures used to assess the PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No (skip to **Q3.8**)
- ○ 3. Don't Know (skip to **Q3.8**)

Q3.7.1.
Which of the following indirect measures were used? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. National student surveys (e.g. NSSE)
- ☐ 2. University conducted student surveys (e.g. OIR)
- ☐ 3. College/department/program student surveys or focus groups
- ☐ 4. Alumni surveys, focus groups, or interviews
- ☐ 5. Employer surveys, focus groups, or interviews
- ☐ 6. Advisory board surveys, focus groups, or interviews
- ☐ 7. Other, specify:

Q3.7.1.1.
Please explain and attach the indirect measure you used to collect data:

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Q3.7.2.
If surveys were used, how was the sample size **decided**?

Q3.7.3.
If surveys were used, how did you **select** your sample:

Q3.7.4.
If surveys were used, what was the response rate?

Question 3C: Other Measures (external benchmarking, licensing exams, standardized tests, etc.)

Q3.8.
Were external benchmarking data, such as licensing exams or standardized tests, used to assess the PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No (skip to **Q3.8.2**)
- ○ 3. Don't Know (skip to **Q3.8.2**)

Q3.8.1.
Which of the following measures was used? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. National disciplinary exams or state/professional licensure exams
- ☐ 2. General knowledge and skills measures (e.g. CLA, ETS PP, etc.)
- ☐ 3. Other standardized knowledge and skill exams (e.g. ETC, GRE, etc.)
- ☐ 4. Other, specify:

Q3.8.2.
Were other measures used to assess the PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No (skip to **Q4.1**)
- ○ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q4.1**)

Q3.8.3.
If other measures were used, please specify:

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(**Remember**: Save your progress)

Question 4: Data, Findings, and Conclusions

Q4.1.
Please provide simple tables and/or graphs to summarize the assessment data, findings, and conclusions for the selected PLO for **Q2.1**:

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Q4.2.
Are students doing well and meeting the program standard? If not, how will the program work to improve student performance of the selected PLO?

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Q4.3.
For the selected PLO, the student performance:

- ○ 1. **Exceeded** expectation/standard
- ○ 2. **Met** expectation/standard
- ○ 3. **Partially** met expectation/standard
- ○ 4. Did not meet expectation/standard
- ○ 5. No expectation/standard has been specified
- ○ 6. Don't know

Question 4A: Alignment and Quality

Q4.4.
Did the data, including the direct measures, from all the different assessment tools/measures/methods directly align with the PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No
- ○ 3. Don't know

Q4.5.
Were **all** the assessment tools/measures/methods that were used good measures of the PLO?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No
- ○ 3. Don't know

Question 5: Use of Assessment Data (Closing the Loop)

Q5.1.
As a result of the assessment effort and based on prior feedback from OAPA, do you anticipate *making any changes* for your program (e.g. course structure, course content, or modification of PLOs)?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No (skip to **Q5.2**)
- ○ 3. Don't know (skip to **Q5.2**)

Q5.1.1.
Please describe *what changes* you plan to make in your program as a result of your assessment of this PLO. Include a description of how you plan to assess the impact of these changes.

Q5.1.2.
Do you have a plan to assess the *impact of the changes* that you anticipate making?

- ○ 1. Yes
- ○ 2. No
- ○ 3. Don't know

Q5.2.

How have the assessment data from the last annual assessment been used so far? [**Check all that apply**]	1. Very Much	2. Quite a Bit	3. Some	4. Not at All	5. N/A
1. Improving specific courses	○	○	○	○	○
2. Modifying curriculum	○	○	○	○	○
3. Improving advising and mentoring	○	○	○	○	○
4. Revising learning outcomes/goals	○	○	○	○	○

5. Revising rubrics and/or expectations	○	○	○	○	○
6. Developing/updating assessment plan	○	○	○	○	○
7. Annual assessment reports	○	○	○	○	○
8. Program review	○	○	○	○	○
9. Prospective student and family information	○	○	○	○	○
10. Alumni communication	○	○	○	○	○
11. WSCUC accreditation (regional accreditation)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Program accreditation	○	○	○	○	○
13. External accountability reporting requirement	○	○	○	○	○
14. Trustee/Governing Board deliberations	○	○	○	○	○
15. Strategic planning	○	○	○	○	○
16. Institutional benchmarking	○	○	○	○	○
17. Academic policy development or modifications	○	○	○	○	○
18. Institutional improvement	○	○	○	○	○
19. Resource allocation and budgeting	○	○	○	○	○
20. New faculty hiring	○	○	○	○	○
21. Professional development for faculty and staff	○	○	○	○	○
22. Recruitment of new students	○	○	○	○	○

23. Other, specify:

Q5.2.1.
Please provide a detailed example of how you used the assessment data above:

(**Remember**: Save your progress)

Additional Assessment Activities

Q6.
Many academic units have collected assessment data on aspect of their program *that are not related to the PLOs* (i.e. impacts of an advising center, etc.). **If** your program/academic unit has collected data on program *elements*, please briefly report your results here:

As described above, this year, Geography's annual assessment did not focus on one or more of our PLOs, but turns its attention to our Human Geography concentration. An indirect finding of our past two annual assessment reports indicates that we may have a problem with graduation rates for our human geography concentration. At any time, the numbers of majors that claim the Human Geography concentration are decent, but something may be happening as those majors approach graduation. The number of Human Geography graduates seems low. This assessment report attempts to determine if we really do have a problem with getting students through our Human Geography concentration, and, if so, what is the extent of the problem. Our assessment report is attached, and it includes data collection (direct measures) and analysis.

Human Geography Concentration Assessment Report.pdf
584.69 KB

No file attached

Q7.
What PLO(s) do you plan to assess next year? [**Check all that apply**]

- ☐ 1. Critical Thinking
- ☐ 2. Information Literacy
- ☐ 3. Written Communication
- ☐ 4. Oral Communication
- ☐ 5. Quantitative Literacy
- ☐ 6. Inquiry and Analysis
- ☐ 7. Creative Thinking
- ☐ 8. Reading
- ☐ 9. Team Work
- ☐ 10. Problem Solving
- ☐ 11. Civic Knowledge and Engagement
- ☐ 12. Intercultural Knowledge and Competency
- ☐ 13. Ethical Reasoning
- ☐ 14. Foundations and Skills for Lifelong Learning
- ☐ 15. Global Learning
- ☐ 16. Integrative and Applied Learning
- ☐ 17. Overall Competencies for GE Knowledge
- ☐ 18. Overall Competencies in the Major/Discipline
- ☐ 19. Other, specify any PLOs not included above:

a.
b.
c.

Q8. Please attach any additional files here:

No file attached | No file attached | No file attached | No file attached

Q8.1.
Have you attached any files to this form? If yes, please list every attached file here:

Human Geography Concentration Assessment Report

Program Information (**Required**)

P1.
Program/Concentration Name(s): [by degree]
BA Geography

P1.1.
Program/Concentration Name(s): [by department]
Geography BA

P2.
Report Author(s):
Michael Schmandt

P2.1.
Department Chair/Program Director:
Michael Schmandt

P2.2.
Assessment Coordinator:
Michael Schmandt

P3.
Department/Division/Program of Academic Unit
Geography

P4.
College:
College of Natural Science & Mathematics

P5.
Total enrollment for Academic Unit during assessment semester (see Departmental Fact Book):
Internal department data places the number majors between 107 and 113, which includes students that

P6.
Program Type:
- (●) 1. Undergraduate baccalaureate major
- ( ) 2. Credential
- ( ) 3. Master's Degree
- ( ) 4. Doctorate (Ph.D./Ed.D./Ed.S./D.P.T./etc.)
- ( ) 5. Other, specify:

P7. Number of **undergraduate degree programs** the academic unit has?
4

P7.1. List all the names:

B.A. in Geography with four different concentrations: Physical Geography, Geographic Information Systems and Analysis, Metropolitan Area Planning, and Human

P7.2. How many concentrations appear on the diploma for this undergraduate program?

4

P8. Number of **master's degree programs** the academic unit has?

0

P8.1. List all the names:

P8.2. How many concentrations appear on the diploma for this master's program?

Don't know

P9. Number of **credential programs** the academic unit has?

0

P9.1. List all the names:

P10. Number of **doctorate degree programs** the academic unit has?

0

P10.1. List all the names:

When was your **assessment plan**...	1. Before 2010-11	2. 2011-12	3. 2012-13	4. 2013-14	5. 2014-15	6. No Plan	7. Don't know
P11. developed?	◉	○	○	○	○	○	○
P11.1. last updated?	○	○	◉	○	○	○	○

P11.3.
Please attach your latest **assessment plan**:

GEOG-Assessment-Plan 2012.pdf
327.42 KB

P12.
Has your program developed a **curriculum map?**

○ 1. Yes
○ 2. No
◉ 3. Don't know

P12.1.
Please attach your latest **curriculum map**:

No file attached

P13.
Has your program indicated in the curriculum map where assessment **of student learning** occurs?

○ 1. Yes
○ 2. No
◉ 3. Don't know

P14.
Does your program have a capstone class?

◉ 1. Yes, indicate: Geography 190: Senior Research Seminar in Geography
○ 2. No
○ 3. Don't know

P14.1.
Does your program have **any** capstone project?

◉ 1. Yes
○ 2. No
○ 3. Don't know

(**Remember**: Save your progress)

Human Geography Concentration Assessment Report (2015-2016)

1. Introduction

Each year the Department of Geography focuses on a couple Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), collects data and evaluates how well we are progressing towards those goals, and identifies ways that we might be able to improve student learning. This year, as the result of past assessment reports, Geography's annual 2015-2016 assessment report takes an uncommon and unconventional turn. Instead of focusing on PLOs, we focus on one of our concentrations, Human Geography, because an indirect finding of our past two annual assessment reports indicates that we may have a problem with graduation rates for this concentration. On the surface, the numbers look good. The number of majors with a Human concentration are consistently in the low 20s, but something may be happening as those majors approach graduation. The two previous annual assessment reports indicate that the number of students graduating with a Human concentration is low, but is it a cause for concern or simply an anomaly? This assessment report attempts to determine if there is a problem with getting students through our Human Geography concentration, and, if so, what is the extent of the problem.

Because this report is fairly unconventional, this report attempts to use the same layout and wording that is used with the on-line 2015-2016 Assessment Report.

2. Background

The Geography major is both broad and deep. Thirty-one units constitutes the core (both lower and upper division courses), which covers all broad geographic subfields, ranging from the natural sciences to the social sciences (and even some humanities too). Fifteen units of depth—the concentrations—deliver a more specialized knowledge on one of four geographic subfields. The concentrations meet the diverse interests of students and also prepare them for the most likely career paths they will follow after graduating. Geographic Information Systems & Analysis (GIS and Analysis) emphasizes working with spatial data and technology. Metropolitan Area Planning (Metro Planning) emphasizes geography as an applied discipline aimed at creating better places; there is no city planning program at Sacramento State or UCD, so this concentration is key in meeting a local need. Physical Geography presents an integrated understanding of climate and weather, water resources, landforms, and biogeography. Finally, the Human Geography concentration emphasizes the social science side of the discipline as well as the regional approach to understanding places. While this range of subject matter may surprise some readers, it is held together by the common threads of the spatial perspective and human-environment interaction.

In the past two assessment reports (2013-2014 and 2014-2015), we noticed surprising numbers. When breaking down the results of our Geography Baseline Knowledge Quiz by concentration, the percentage

of correct scores could not be tabulated for those students with a Human concentration because there were either too few students or no students at all.

To be fair, the results of the baseline quiz do not include every student that takes the quiz. Students typically take the quiz during the Fall semester of their junior year (in Geog 102) and retake it again, three semesters later, during the Spring semester of their senior year (in Geog 190). Some students either go through the system more slowly or were not able to take Geog 102 in their junior year and perhaps took it in their senior year. Since the baseline quiz attempts to show how students' baseline knowledge changes through time, it needs to be consistent through time, and thus it compares how students improved over three semesters.

For the 2013-2014 report, the quiz was administered to 38 students in Geog 190, but of those students, only 20 of them took the quiz three semesters earlier. Of those 20 students, only 2 had Human concentrations. For the 2014-2015 report, none of the 19 students (out of the 34 that took it) were human geographers.

While data from two consecutive years does not necessarily constitute a trend, it could potentially point to a problem. This assessment report seeks to determine if there is a problem, and, if so, what is the extent of the problem.

3. Data Collection Methods

3.1. Direct Measures

Three direct measures were used to assess this concentration.

1) Majors by concentration. We collected 3 semesters (Fall 2015, Spring 2016, and Fall 2016) of data. In the Cognos database (SacVault), one can only select the number of majors by concentration for the current semester. The annual department *Fact Books* focus on Fall data only and only for entering undergraduate students. Still, the 3 datasets are quite consistent; there are no major swings.

2) Graduated majors by concentration. We collected from Cognos 4 years (12 semesters including Summer) of graduation data. When we ran these reports in Spring 2016, obviously no Spring 2016 graduation numbers were available. For that reason, we organized the data into calendar years. We only went back to include 2012 because previous to that our department had different concentrations.

3) Student records of every major (Spring 2016). We tracked all geography majors, regardless of concentration, to see if those focusing on Human Geography behave differently than those participating in the other concentrations. Specifically, we want to see if they change their major or their concentration more frequently. This was the most time consuming part of this assessment report.

3.2. Indirect Measures

No formal indirect measures were used to assess this concentration.

4. Data, Findings, and Conclusions

4.1. Data

Majors by concentration.

What does the data show? In Fall 2016, there were 114 majors that chose 123 concentrations (9 majors are double concentrating). Those focusing on Physical Geography led all Geography concentrations with 46 of the 123 concentrations (37.4 percent). GIS and Analysis was second with 37 (30.1 percent). Those with the Human concentration and the Metro Planning concentration were tied for third with 20 (16.3 percent) each.

	Fall 2015	*Spring 2016*	*Fall 2016*	*3 Semester Total*	*Percent by Concentration*
Physical	48	51	46	145	38.98
GIS and Analysis	33	38	37	108	29.03
Human	21	21	20	62	16.67
Metro Planning	18	19	20	57	15.32
Total Concentrations	120	129	123	372	100
Total Majors	105	107	114		

Looking at the table above, over the past three semesters (Fall 2015 through Fall 2016), the concentration numbers are fairly consistent. The Human concentration numbers while about half that of both the Physical and the GIS and Analysis concentrations are decent. For comparative purposes, note that the numbers for both the Human and the Metro Planning concentrations are nearly identical (the Human concentration slightly edges out Metro Planning).

Graduated students by concentration.

What does the data show? Degrees awarded summary reports were run for the past four years. This is where the Human concentration looks…well…pathetic. In calendar year 2015, the department graduated students with the following concentrations: 16 Physical, 15 GIS and Analysis, 8 Metro Planning, and only 1 Human.

Graduates	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*4yrTotal*	*Percent*
Physical	9	18	12	16	55	33.54
GIS and Analysis	10	10	22	15	57	34.76
Human	2	3	4	1	10	6.10
Metro Planning	6	6	12	8	32	19.51
Other Concentration	8	1	0	1	10	6.10
Total Graduating	35	38	50	41	164	100

Looking at the above table that sums the concentration graduation totals over the past four years (2012-2015), we see somewhat similar numbers. The GIS and Analysis concentration holds a slim lead (34.76 percent) over Physical Geography (33.54). Metro Planning is firmly in third position with 19.51 percent. The Human concentration is a distant fourth place finish with only 6.1 percent.

Student tracker data

The student records of all majors (114, department count), regardless of concentration, that were in the program in Spring 2016 were individually collected and collectively analyzed. By tracking all majors, we can determine if those with the Human concentration behave differently than students in other concentrations. Specifically, we want to see if students with a Human concentration change their major or concentration more frequently than the other students do. To do this, each student record was opened to determine the student's original major(s), his or her first declared concentration in Geography, and any subsequent concentration changes the student might have made to his or her program (including if they left the major).

Note: this analysis is a snapshot in time (Spring 2016). The dataset included 50 seniors, and many of them have had time to change their degree/concentration requirements. Some of the 6 freshmen, 15 sophomores, and 43 juniors (most of our majors are transfers) are fairly new to the program, and thus may still make changes. The results simply compare student behavior by concentration. A brief look at class rank by concentration did not show any major differences.

The following pages highlight the students in each of the concentrations. Students that declare a concentration and stick with only that concentration have the last two columns highlighted in **yellow**. This means that there were no changes to the student's programs, and this can be viewed as an indicator of satisfaction. Those that stayed with the declared concentration but picked up an additional concentration are highlighted in **orange**. The reason to declare a second concentration can occur for a number of reasons, including interest in a different subject matter; marketability; and while pursuing one's concentration, a student discovered that he or she has met all or almost all of another concentration's requirements. Those that abandon their original concentration or even leave the major are highlighted in **red**, which can be construed as a sign of dissatisfaction.

4.2. Findings and Conclusions

When combining the results from the first two datasets (majors by concentration and graduated majors by concentration), it is clear that the Human concentration, by far, has the worst graduation rate. Although 16.7 percent of our majors have selected the Human concentration, over the past four years, they make up only 6.1 percent of our department's graduates.

	Majors by Concentration (percent over 3 sem.)	*Majors Graduating (percent over 4 yrs.)*
Physical	38.98	33.54
GIS and Analysis	29.03	34.76
Human	16.67	6.10
Metro Planning	15.32	19.51
Other Concentration	0	6.10
Total Percent	100	100

The Human concentration numbers seem even worse when compared to the other concentrations. In the table above, evaluate the Human and Metro Planning numbers. While the percentage of students that hold either of the two concentrations are similar, the percent of graduating Metro Planning students (19.5) is more than three times better than that of the Human concentration (6.1). From these results, we can state that the Human concentration does have a problem with graduation rates.

Let us turn our attention to the student concentration tables found on pages 5-8. Here, the records of every major (114, department count made in Spring 2016), regardless of concentration, were opened to determine the student's original major(s), his or her first declared concentration in Geography, and any subsequent concentration changes the student might have made to his or her program (including if the student left the major). What we wish to determine is the extent of the problem in the Human concentration. Do Human concentration students behave differently than those students in other concentrations? In general (and comparatively), are they turning away from the concentration? Are they diversifying by picking up a second concentration?

Although comparable numbers are derived below, perhaps the best way to get the overall comparative gestalt is to view pages 5-8, one after another, to notice the color differences in each of the tables. **Yellow** is an indicator of student satisfaction and concentration health. Students that declare a concentration and stick with only that concentration have the last two columns highlighted in yellow. In the table below, the variable is *No changes*. When yellow is displayed in only the last column, it means that students picked up the present concentration (either by adding it to their initial concentration or by switching to it solely). In the table below, the variable is *Picked up*.

On pages 5-8, those that stayed with their declared concentration but picked up an additional concentration are highlighted in **orange**. Again, the reasons to declare a second concentration are many. Sometimes the student develops an additional interest in a different subfield, but he or she is still

interested in the initial concentration. In other cases, picking up another concentration may be perceived as making one more employable. The idea is that two concentrations cover more bases. An additional reason for some students with excess units is that they discover that they are only one or two courses short of double concentrating, and they decide to do so. The decisions to add a second concentration are many, but if the concentrations display a lot of orange, it can be viewed by the department in two broad ways: 1) it could indicate that the initial concentration is in some way lacking (e.g. students cannot get the courses they need, so they delay graduation and pick up a concentration in the process), and 2) it tells us something about the promise of the concentration that they are adding (e.g. students perceive that the second concentration might make them more employable). In the table below, the variable is *Diversified*.

Although we can be happy for the students that leave concentrations (or even the major) to do something that is personally more satisfying for themselves, from a department's perspective, excessive **red** indicates trouble. They are not satisfied with something in the concentration or major, and they seek another. In the table below, the variable is *Dropped*.

Viewing the tables on pages 5-8, yellow is the majority color in every table, but it is the overwhelming color in only three of the four concentrations. Orange and red make up a greater proportion of the Human concentration table.

Concentrations	*Initial Count*	*No changes (yellow, 2 columns)*	*Dropped (red)*	*Diversified (orange)*	*Picked up (yellow, last column)*	*Final Count*	*2nd concentration*
Physical	45	40	4	1	9	50	2
		(88.8%)	(8.9%)	(2.2%)	(20.0%)	*+5*	(4.0%)
GIS and Analysis	26	22	3	1	8	31	4
		(84.6)	(11.5)	(3.8)	(30.7)	*+5*	(12.9)
Human	23	12	7	4	4	20	8
		(52.2)	(30.4)	(17.4)	(17.4)	*-3*	(40.0)
Metro Planning	12	9	2	1	11	21	8
		(75.0)	(16.0)	(8.3)	(91.6)	*+9*	(38.1)

Before we look at the numbers, let us again warn about their usage. Because we are tracking all majors that were enrolled in Spring 2016 and some of them were at different points in their academic careers, the numbers and percentages in the table above can only be used to compare the relative health of the different concentrations. The dataset includes 6 freshmen, 15 sophomores, 43 juniors (most of our majors are transfers), and 50 seniors. Many of these students might make additional changes as they progress through our program. The results simply compare student behavior by concentration.

Although there are a lot of interesting numbers in the table above, we will focus on the Human concentration. Although we have been comparing the Human concentration to Metro Planning (due to the size of the concentration), Human's *initial count* is actually closer to the GIS and Analysis count.

Similarities with that concentration, or with any concentration, are few as we make our way through the numbers. The Human concentration has the lowest percentage of *no changes*, the highest percentage of *dropped*, the highest percentage of *diversified*, the lowest percentage of *picked ups*, and it is the only concentration to lose students in the *final count*. None of these numbers are good. This means that students that hold or held the Human concentration are comparatively either leaving the concentration or diversifying at higher rates than all the other concentrations. Besides *final count*, the Human and Metro Planning concentrations do share another similarity. They both have comparable percentages of students that hold *2nd concentrations*, but this is clearly for different reasons. Eleven students diversified by adding Metro Planning (only 4 students diversified by adding Human). In addition, only one initial Metro Planning student diversified by adding a second concentration while four Human concentration students added a second concentration.

From these clear results, the Human concentration under preforms all of the other concentrations. Not only does it have a comparative problem with graduation rates, but students are leaving or diversifying at much higher rates.

The next step is to determine why. Although this is beyond the scope of this report, we can begin to speculate. One reason for diversification (or changing concentrations) might be due to a perceived weakness in how the Human concentration prepares students for the job market. We know that many with the Human concentration gravitate to the Metro Planning or the GIS and Analysis concentrations (either by changing concentration or by diversifying). Another reason may be that these students lose interest in the concentration because of the course's subject matter. Many of the human and regional courses are offered once every two years, and if transferring students miss an opportunity to take a particular desired course (perhaps because they did not have the prerequisites), they may become less interested in the concentration. To understand the why question, we need to survey all of our current and recent students that hold or once held the Human concentration. Understanding why is likely to be the topic of our next assessment report.

5. Use of Assessment Data (Closing the Loop)

As stated above, we need more information to understand why our Human concentration is underperforming. Hopefully, by surveying our current and former students, we can "close the loop" by implementing informed changes that will strengthen the concentration. It is possible that these changes may include modifying existing courses, creating new courses, making changes to the Human concentration curriculum, incorporating courses from outside the department, improving advising and mentoring, making connections to external internships and jobs, changing the current teaching assignments of faculty, and justifying new faculty requests.

ASSESSMENT PLAN

Our Assessment Process

The primary mission of Geography Program, as identified in the self-study for its 2005 program review, is to provide students in the geography major (B.A.) with a solid undergraduate liberal arts education focused on geography. A secondary goal is to prepare majors with the knowledge and skills needed to pursue a graduate degree in geography or to obtain employment in a geography-related field. The Geography Department has been formally assessing its performance in these areas via its own internal assessment process since 2000-2001. The process has undergone continuous modification since then, most notably as part of a 2002-2003 university-wide assessment initiative undertaken by Academic Affairs under the direction of Linda Buckley, and in response to recommendations from the Department's 2005 program review. The current assessment process described below builds on these earlier efforts.

Goals and Learning Outcomes

The Geography Department has identified the following goals and learning objectives for students in the undergraduate Geography program. The numbers in brackets after each goal indicate related campus Baccalaureate Learning Goals.

Goals: Students completing the B.A. degree in Geography will:

1. Have an understanding of the nature of Geography as an academic discipline, including familiarity with its history and principal subfields [1,2];

2. Demonstrate (a) a knowledge of the basic concepts of physical and human geography [1, 2] and (b) competency in selected geographic techniques [1,3];

3. Display competency in the graphic expression of geographic/spatial data (maps, photographs, graphs, data bases) [1,3];

4. Display competency in written expression with respect to clarity, logical expression, and effective argument [1, 2, 3];

5. Understand and apply the basic research skills, including the ability to (a) critically evaluate the research of others [1, 2, 3, 4] and (b) effectively design and carry out a research project on one's own [5];

6. Acquire knowledge and skills sufficient to allow one to pursue advanced study in geography or find employment in a geography-related field [1, 2, 3, 4, 5].

(**CSUS Baccalaureate Learning Goals:** [1] Competence in the Disciplines; [2] Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural Worlds; [3] Intellectual and Practical Skills; [4] Personal and Social Responsibility; [5] Integrative Learning.)

Learning Outcomes: Various learning outcomes are identified to help the student achieve the above goals. The outcomes reflect the different levels of learning set forth in Bloom's taxonomy, including basic knowledge and comprehension, application, analysis and evaluation, and synthesis. Key outcomes, along with the means for their assessment, are found in the accompanying table. Although the learning outcomes are addressed in required courses throughout the major, there are nonetheless key courses that play a central role in helping students achieve these outcomes. These are also identified in the table below.

Learning Outcome	Relevant Course(s)	Means of Assessment
One Identify and describe basic concepts and patterns in physical and human geography.	GEOG 1, GEOG 2, GEOG 11, GEOG 118 and upper-division breadth requirements	Baseline knowledge quiz
Two Display knowledge of the history of Geography as an academic discipline and a familiarity with its contemporary models, approaches, and theories.	GEOG 102, GEOG 190	Baseline knowledge quiz
Three Demonstrate competency in one or more of the basic geographic tools/techniques for data collection, display, and analysis.	GEOG 3 and the upper-division techniques courses, including the field courses	GEOG 190 senior project; senior seminar reflective evaluation
Four Demonstrate graphic literacy in the use and analysis of maps, graphs, and spatial data sets.	GEOG 3, GEOG 105, GEOG 107, GEOG 109, GEOG 110, GEOG 163	Baseline knowledge quiz; GEOG 190 senior project; senior seminar reflective evaluation

Five Show written competency in the description and analysis of geographic subject matter.	GEOG 102, GEOG 190	GEOG 190 senior project; senior seminar reflective evaluation
Six Analyze and evaluate scholarly writing within the discipline.	GEOG 102, GEOG 190	GEOG 102, GEOG 190 senior project; senior seminar reflective evaluation
Seven Synthesize geographic models, data, and methodologies in research design.	GEOG 190	GEOG 190 senior project; senior seminar reflective evaluation
Eight Acquire the overall competencies necessary to success in graduate school and post-graduation careers.	The major as a whole	Graduating senior interview; NSM senior survey; periodic alumni survey

Methods of Assessment

The Geography Department's assessment process is designed (1) to evaluate the degree to which students in the Geography B.A. program achieve the goals and outcomes above and (2) to identify potential areas for improvement. While course-level assessment of student performance takes place within the courses themselves, assessment of student performance at the programmatic level employs an additional set of assessment measures. Central to the Department's assessment process are two courses: GEOG 102 (Ideas & Skills in Geography), a gateway course taken by all students during their first fall semester in the major, and GEOG 190 (Senior Research Seminar in Geography) a capstone course, which requires the student to synthesize much of what he or she has learned as a major through design of an individualized research project. The latter course is taken during the student's final semester before graduation. Based on recommendations from the Department's last program review, these two classes have become central to the Geography assessment process.

In all, the Department employs the following six assessment measures:

1. Baseline Quiz: This instrument assesses student knowledge of basic geographic concepts and facts. It consists of 54 objective questions and is brief, taking only about 20 minutes to administer. It is now given electronically to students in both the gateway course (GEOG 102) and the senior seminar (GEOG 190). Its purpose is twofold: to identify the student's level of basic geographic knowledge at both the time of entering

the program and at the end of his or her time in the major (thus measuring "value added"), and to identify those areas in which student knowledge is deemed deficient and corrective measures may be called for. There are 19 questions in physical geography, 20 in human geography, and 15 in graphic literacy (maps and graphs). *Faculty responsible:* Prof. Krabacher

2. Senior Research Project: The central focus of the capstone course, GEOG 190 (Senior Research Seminar in Geography), is design and execution of a research project. In doing so students have to complete the various phases of the research process (articulating the research question/hypothesis, literature review, selection of methodologies, data collection and analysis, graphical presentation, discussion of findings), and report their findings in a paper and a poster. The exercise is one of synthesis, requiring the student to draw upon the broad range of skills and knowledge acquired in the major. A standardized grading rubric based on a model proposed by the Center for Teaching and Learning was employed in the evaluation for the first time in Spring 2008. *Faculty responsible:* Profs. Datel, Krabacher, and Wanket

3. Senior Seminar Reflective Evaluation: Students in the GEOG 190 senior seminar are asked to complete a questionnaire as part of the end-of-semester course evaluation. While most questions relate to the student's GEOG 190 experience, some are broader in scope, addressing such topics as: subject matter in which students felt it would have been desirable to have had greater experience prior to taking the seminar, prior courses that were most useful to them in completing the seminar research project, etc. These responses are useful in identifying student perceptions of curriculum strengths and weaknesses. *Faculty responsible:* Profs. Datel, Krabacher, and Wanket

4. Graduating Senior Exit Interview: At the end of each semester, the department chair invites graduating seniors to participate in an unstructured conversation about their experiences in the major. This ordinarily takes place in a relaxed setting, usually over pizza and beverages in the University Union. The purpose is to assess the level of student satisfaction with the major and identify what students perceive as strengths, weaknesses, and desirable changes. *Faculty responsible:* Department Chair

5. NSM Graduating Senior Survey: The NSM Dean has instituted a college-wide survey of all graduating seniors. The questionnaire requests information on undergraduate internships and work experiences as well as each student's current employment situation and plans for the future, whether academic or otherwise.

6. Periodic Alumni Survey: The Office of Institutional Research conducts a survey of each program's alumni on a regular basis. These surveys assess alumni perceptions of (1) the

usefulness of the major in realizing post-graduation academic and/or career goals and (2) the strengths and weaknesses of the Geography curriculum, given the perspective lent by time. Because these OIR surveys occur only every six years, the department has experimented with conducting its own e-mail based surveys of recent graduates. *Faculty responsible:* Department Chair

Assessment Cycle

The Geography program's annual assessment activities occur over a 12-month cycle, beginning in the fall semester of a given academic year and culminating at the annual Geography Department faculty retreat in August just prior the opening of the fall semester of the following academic year. Thus:

- **Fall Semester** – Baseline quiz administered in gateway course (GEOG 102); graduating seniors interviewed; NSM survey administered.
- **Spring Semester** – Baseline quiz administered in capstone course (GEOG 190); senior projects graded using standard rubric (GEOG 190); reflective evaluations completed (GEOG 190) ; graduating seniors interviewed; NSM survey administered; informal e-mail surveys sent to recent alumni if need is felt.
- **Summer** – Department chair processes data and uses it to inform the annual assessment report, usually due to the dean on July 1.
- **August** – Geography faculty retreat: discussion/analysis of assessment data and possible program changes identified in response; possible modifications to assessment process proposed.

Rubric for Evaluating Projects in Senior Research Seminar in Geography (GEOG 190)

Elements of the Paper	Scoring Scale (5-4-3)
Statement of Research Questions or Hypotheses	**5** Clearly stated and clearly geographical; suitable for senior project (given constraints) **4** Present, but somewhat unclear; geographical aspects not explicit; possibly unsuitable **3** Not present or quite unclear; not geographical; clearly not suitable
Literature Review	**5** Relevant, thorough, well-organized **4** Generally relevant; some extraneous material and/or key sources missed; organization needs tightening **3** Merely lists studies; little or no logic to selection of sources; poorly organized
Methodology Choice and Description	**5** Highly appropriate methods selected; detailed description of methods; logically connected to research questions **4** Weak methods or insufficient description of methods **3** Inappropriate methods selected
Presentation of Results (Data and Analysis)	**5** Data are complete, properly reported, and correctly analyzed **4** Data are appropriate but some mistakes in reporting and/or analysis are evident; may be less than complete **3** Data are seriously incomplete or improperly reported; major gaps and/or mistakes appear in the analysis
Graphics	**5** Maps, charts, graphs, photos, and other images have a high degree of relevance, completeness, and quality **4** Graphics are generally relevant, fairly complete, and of acceptable quality **3** Graphics are inappropriate, missing, and/or of poor quality

Discussion of Findings	**5** Discussion is insightful, thorough, well-organized, and clearly ties the work into a larger geographical research tradition **4** Discussion is mechanical; some gaps in analysis; organization may be weak; ties to a larger geographical research tradition somewhat unclear **3** Discussion fails to interpret data (merely repeats results) and fails to place work in a larger geographical research tradition
Overall Written Expression	**5** Few if any mechanical writing or formatting errors; writing is clear and well-organized; logic of arguments presented is unassailable **4** Minor mechanical writing or formatting errors; writing is competent but has some problems with clarity and organization; logic has some minor weaknesses **3** Serious mechanical writing or formatting errors; writing is unclear and poorly organized; logic has serious flaws

Total points possible = 35.