Assessment Reporting within Program Review
Mock-up example from "Department A"

Summary of Assessment Approach
Assessments of student learning outcomes have been ongoing for x years. This report focuses primarily on core competencies—critical thinking, analysis, writing, research, giving and receiving critique, and oral presentation skills—and independence of work. Student learning in these areas is assessed using rubrics tailored to the level of expectation (targeted courses *vs.* Capstone Project). Rubrics, which have been employed in some form for x years, have been revised and refined in response to results and to changes in curriculum and pedagogy. We have added student and alumni feedback, as well as Faculty Advisory Committee monitoring, to the process.

What changes were made to the assessment plan?
The basic plan has remained consistent, relative to overall program goals. The rubrics have been revised in light of assessment results and changes to the curriculum or pedagogy.

What program and student learning outcomes have been assessed?
1. By the conclusion of the targeted coursework, the student will be able to demonstrate basic competency in critical thinking and analysis, in clear and coherent writing, and in understanding the fundamentals of inquiry and evidence.
2. By completion of the program the student will be able to demonstrate a high level of competency in critical thinking and analysis, in clear and coherent writing, in use of evidence in constructing and sustaining an argument, and in presenting ideas orally.
3. By completion of the program, the student will demonstrate an ability to work independently and successfully design and conduct a research project.

What methods were used for the assessment?
1. From 200x-200x, student work completed for the targeted courses was assessed using specifically-designed rubrics (attached). Rubrics focused on each of areas of competency. Since most of the targeted courses have 15 or fewer students, we assessed work of all students in those courses. Two faculty completed rubrics on each piece of student work. Results were compiled, analyzed, compared to targets, and shared with the faculty and director.

2 and 3. Students complete a Capstone Project, a research project that utilizes a clear process to answer a research question, culminating in written and oral presentations. From 200x-200x, faculty employed a rubric (attached) to assess student competencies as demonstrated in the Capstone Projects. The rubric also addresses students' demonstrated ability to work independently. All 20 Capstone Projects each year were assessed by two

faculty members. Results were compiled, analyzed, compared to targets, and shared with the faculty, the director, and the Faculty Advisory Committee. See attached summary of rubric results compared to target performance.

The assessments depend heavily on rubrics and discussion. On an on-going basis, faculty develop, test, refine, and employ rubrics in the assessments. Since most of the faculty teach the targeted courses and mentor Capstone Projects, discussion among the faculty regarding ongoing assessments, results, student progress, alternative approaches, and suggested changes to the curriculum, pedagogy, or student support is also ongoing and part of the normal discourse. In this way, even though not all faculty are involved "hands-on", the assessments are fully integrated into the management of the program.

What were the important findings?
1. See attached summary of rubric results compared to performance goals. The assessment of students' coursework revealed that an unacceptably high percentage of students were not competent especially in writing and research methods (methods of inquiry and evidence).

2 and 3.
See attached summary of rubric results compared to targets. Almost all students demonstrate a minimum level of competency. An area identified as needing attention is oral communication skills.

What changes/improvements were made to the program as a result of the assessment?
1. In 200y, the chair and faculty worked together to articulate clearer purpose, aims, and criteria for the courses (including revising rubrics, attached). In addition, a more personalized approach was adopted: faculty members write evaluative narratives for each new student and identify those students that needed more support in developing these competencies. Students in need of writing skills are referred to the University's Writing Center, as well as one developed specifically for the program. We designed and implemented a pre-Capstone Project course to help prepare students for the research experience.

2 and 3. For the Capstone Project, specific standards of excellence were developed, which facilitated refinement of the rubric (attached). A manual for mentors was developed, and a Capstone website offering guidelines, tips, sample proposals and projects was created for students. A mandatory practice "oral run-through" of students' presentations is now required.

We initiated additional assessments to supplement the rubrics. As of 200y, students prepare extensive evaluations of the Capstone Project experience (form attached), which are used to further refine the experience. The Department Faculty Advisory Committee attends presentations, monitoring and evaluating the overall development of the Capstone experience. In preparation is a survey of graduates regarding their academic experience and subsequent professional work.

What additional assessments are planned for the future?
Rubric-based assessments of the courses and Capstone Projects will be on-going. In addition, rubrics for the pre-Capstone course will be designed, tested and implemented. We will continue the student evaluations of the Capstone Project, and the Committee monitoring. We plan to institute the alumni survey in 200z.

Attachments:
Rubrics for targeted courses and Capstone Project
Capstone standards of excellence
Table: Student performance as measured by rubric for targeted courses
Table: Student performance as measured by rubric for Capstone Project
Capstone Project evaluation form to solicit student feedback