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Academic Learning Compact : M. L. A. Liberal Studies [Effective 2013]

University of South Florida St. Petersburg.

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Academic Learning Compacts
MLA Liberal Studies

2013 – 2014
DUE: May 2013

Academic Program-linked College Mission-based Goals/Objectives

In the matrix on the following page, please place an X in the grid that identifies the degree program goals and objectives that align with the institutional mission-based goals/objectives and the College based goals/objectives. These goals/objectives need to be documented in your ALC data.

| UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA ST. PETERSBURG GOALS & OBJECTIVES | | COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES GOALS & OBJECTIVES | | UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|------------------------|---------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|---------|--------|-----------------|--|
| | | | | Anthropology | Biology | Criminology | Literature & Writing | Environmental Science (BA) | Graphic Design | Political Science | Psychology | History | I.S.S. | Journalism (BA) | |
| Academic Performance | Use sustained evidence of SLO's and student achievement for continuous improvement | Initiate and expand graduate programs and develop formal academic ties to other graduate programs within the USF system | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Offer certificate, undergraduate and graduate programs that meet regional needs | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Implement and support information and instructional technologies that facilitate effective pedagogies | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Enhance programs that specifically support academic excellence | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Increase student awareness of participating in a global society | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Student Engagement | Create a freshman experience that enables students to thrive and move successfully through to graduation | Our students will have critical skills and a broad outlook that will make them engaged and productive citizens Incorporate civic engagement, service learning, and experiential learning into their classes, when appropriate | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Foster institutional pride and strengthen connections within the campus community | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Enhance opportunities for increased student involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Diversity & Inclusion | Insure an inclusive community where differences are respected and valued | Cultivate a vigorous liberal arts culture by recruiting talented diverse students, maintaining small class sizes, and mentoring those students we have. Encourage free discussion, foster critical thinking, demand that our students write, and work across disciplines | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Attract and retain a diverse student population | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Increase the diversity of faculty and staff | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Research & Creative Activities | Create a vibrant culture of faculty research and creative scholarship | Make significant and meaningful contributions to ongoing dialogues in our academic fields. We expect our undergraduate and graduate students to engage in research in collaboration with faculty | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Promote and support undergraduate research as a meaningful aspect of campus life | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Enhance and support research and scholarly collaborations with community partners | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Signature Page for Academic Program

Academic Program: MLA in Liberal Studies

Chair/Coordinator: Lisa Starks-Estes

Date: 9/23/14

Summary Statement – Academic Program Performance in 2013-14

Provide a summary statement about academic program performance over the previous year including high points and low points.

The MLA in Liberal Studies Program completed our fourth year in 2013-14. Academic performance continued to be high in 2013-14; once again, we saw 11 students graduate, making the total number for our program 23. Students continued to do well on comprehensive exams in general. Three students had to rewrite a section but then received passing scores. One student passed with distinction (all “high passes”), and several received at a score of “high pass” on at least one essay. We had 7 successful MLA Projects and 4 excellent theses (2 of which earned a “High Pass”). Although I was gone on sabbatical Fall 13, I worked closely with Jill McCracken, Interim Director, to make sure that we did not sacrifice the overall goal of creating a program that is tailored, custom-made for each individual student, with quality courses and strong mentoring from faculty. It was challenging to do so while on sabbatical, but I believe that we all worked together to advise and recruit students.

We are still grappling with the difficulty of students who are admitted conditionally but are not quite prepared for graduate classes, but I believe that this situation has improved somewhat in the past year. We also continue to face the challenge of retention. As in the past, we do still lose some students for the reason above (poor performance), and others we lose because of life choices (spouse moves, job change, etc.) or illness, death in family. I do think that we’ve improved on maintaining contact with students at risk for probation or dropping out. I’ve reached out to a couple, namely one that hopes to return in Spring 15 to improve his record. As Program Director, I try my best to keep track of these students, to help those who need it, and to encourage students to do well via email, social media (MLA in Liberal Studies Facebook Group), end-of-semester gatherings, and other program events. I do not have any staff to assist in these efforts; I do them all myself. It benefits the students greatly when other professors post on Facebook or participate in other ways.

Our enrollment has slowed down a bit, now that our program has lost its “newness.” I think that we need to boost it. I’ve talked to our Graduate Specialist about brochures and other marketing campaigns. I also got a former student to agree to be the “face” of our program, but I haven’t yet seen any action taken in this direction. I will look forward to it. I think it’s important for this program, as the link to it is buried at the bottom of the list of USFSP Master’s Programs on USFSP website. Most students say that they find the link only by accident.

Summary Statement – Impact of Changes Made in 2013-2014

Provide a summary statement about changes that were made in your program as a result of ongoing assessment in 2013-14 and the positive/negative impact of the changes that were made.

We tried offering ENG 6009 Intro to Graduate Studies in both Fall and Spring semesters to make sure that incoming students got a good start. However, it didn't work out very well. We ended up with two small sections, in which there wasn't enough interaction between students. So, we now have a revamped intro course, currently offered as a hybrid only in Fall semesters. We think this change will make for stronger incoming groups of students. In other core courses, instructors updated readings and assignments, which did help many students. One plans to make further changes in 14-15, as noted below. Also, in 2012-2013, I began working hard to make sure that students contacted professors to be better prepared for their comprehensive exams, projects, and theses. Students' performances in these areas did improve, although there are some problems in making sure that those working with professors in CAS departments other than English and COE keep up with their work. Sometimes, the problem is with the professors who do not communicate with students in a timely fashion.

Academic Learning Compacts: 2013 – 2014

“... to ensure student achievement in undergraduate and graduate degree programs ...”

Academic Program: MLA in Liberal Studies

Person Responsible: Lisa Starks-Estes

Mission of Academic Program (include URL): <http://www.usfsp.edu/coas/llw/MLA.htm>

The MLA in Liberal Studies offers two “build-your own” tracks. In the [Focused Studies](#) track, students explore a particular subject from within the larger perspective of the liberal arts, earning 18 of the 33 required hours in a specific discipline. As part of their core requirements, students may take courses in pedagogy and education, theory, or research methods, which would enable them to teach at the community college level (with the 18hrs), continue on for the Ph.D., or work in areas related to their chosen field of study. In the [Interdisciplinary Studies](#) track, students build their own unique degree from various disciplines (e.g., culture and the environment, ethics and the workplace, social justice and engagement, etc.), preparing them for future study or professional careers in related areas, including work for non-profits and other businesses.

List Program Goal(s) / Objective(s):

Program Goals / Objectives must be mapped to College Goals / Objectives – use consistent nomenclature.

[Please note impact of any changes that were made as a result of 2010-11 assessment]

ALCs must address student learning in four areas: 1. Content/Discipline Skills; 2. Communication Skills; Critical Thinking Skills; and 4. Civic Engagement.

1. Content/Discipline Skills

- a. Students demonstrate knowledge of disciplinary area(s) of study—major concepts, movements, historical periods, or other relevant categories in their major field(s).
- b. Students demonstrate knowledge of major theoretical paradigms and prevalent contemporary approaches in major field(s).
- c. Students demonstrate knowledge of pedagogical theory, teaching methods, or other methodologies relevant to disciplinary field(s).

2. Communication Skills

- a. Students demonstrate the ability to write with a clear awareness of purpose, audience, and medium, through a writing process that involves reflection and/or revision.

- b. Students demonstrate the ability to access and evaluate library holdings, to develop a graduate-level research protocol that effectively utilizes appropriate scholarly resources (including electronic, print, and other materials); to assess the quality of traditional as well as non-academic sources; to conduct research that involves relevant primary materials; and to identify the terms of an ongoing critical argument and situate their own writing within that dialogue.
- c. Students demonstrate the ability to communicate their ideas and support their interpretations effectively through oral presentations or performances.

3. Critical Thinking Skills

- a. Students make critical connections between relevant components of their major discipline(s).
- b. Students critically examine the content of their field(s) from within a broader perspective of liberal arts.
- c. Students critically examine their major disciplinary field(s) from an applied ethics perspective, addressing important ethical issues or questions in their area(s) of study.

4. Civic Engagement

- a. Students engage in productive community-based experience to promote increased awareness of issues relevant to area(s) of study, share the skills and knowledge they have learned in the classroom with others and, in return, gain experience and developing hands-on skills from others in the community, and demonstrate the ability to reflect on these experiences in support of the other learning outcomes above.

1. Content/Discipline Skills

| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2014-15 |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| A. Students demonstrate knowledge of disciplinary area(s) of study—major concepts, movements, historical periods, or other relevant categories in their major field(s). | Project in Theory/Methodology core courses; 2 courses taught Spring 13. Also, this SLO is assessed in | 100% students have B or higher on assignment All students must receive “low pass,” | Findings 100% students who completed the course met competency in S13. (1 student petitioned for late withdrawal in one course.) | Instructor of Comp Pedagogy (1 core course), plans to add earlier paper drafts, more peer reviews, fewer readings with more time on each to help |

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| | comprehensive exam--each exam includes 3 essays evaluated with “high pass,” “pass,” “low pass,” or “fail” | “pass,” or “high pass” in all three essays of every exam | 100% students met competency. All 12 students passed Comprehensive Exam; 5 students had to retake one section, but then were given passing score. | students who struggle in the class. For Comps, I plan to continue encouraging students to work with faculty on preparation. |
| B. Students demonstrate knowledge of major theoretical paradigms and prevalent contemporary approaches in major field(s). | Project in Theory/Methodology courses demonstrating SLO; 2 courses taught in Spring 13. | 100% students have B or higher on assignment | 100% students who completed the course met competency in S13. (1 student petitioned for late withdrawal in 1 course.) | Instructor of Comp Pedagogy (1 core course), plans to add earlier paper drafts, more peer reviews, fewer readings with more time on each to help students who struggle in the class. |
| C. Students demonstrate knowledge of pedagogical theory, teaching methods, or other methodologies relevant to disciplinary field(s). | Project in Composition Pedagogy core option course, taught Spring 13. | 100% students have B or higher on assignment | 100% students who completed the course met competency in S13. (1 student petitioned for late withdrawal in one course.) | Instructor of Comp Pedagogy (1 core course), plans to add earlier paper drafts, more peer reviews, fewer readings with more time on each to help students who struggle in the class. |

*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.

Academic Learning Compacts: 2013-2014 (Continued)

| 2. Communication Skills | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2014-15 |
| A. Students demonstrate the ability to write with a clear awareness of purpose, audience, and medium, through a writing process that involves reflection and/or revision. | Comprehensive exams-- each exam includes 3 essays evaluated with “high pass,” “pass,” “low pass,” or “fail” | All students must receive “low pass,” “pass,” or “high pass” in all three essays of every exam | 100% students met competency. All 12 students passed Comprehensive Exam; 5 students had to retake one section, but then were given passing score. | I plan to continue encouraging students to work with faculty on preparation. |
| B. Students demonstrate the ability to access and evaluate library holdings, to develop a graduate-level research protocol that effectively utilizes appropriate scholarly resources (including electronic, print, and other materials); to assess the quality of traditional as well as non-academic sources; to conduct research that involves relevant primary materials; and to identify the terms of an ongoing critical argument and situate | Research project/annotated bibliography in Into to Graduate Studies core course. | 100% must have at least “B” or higher | 90% students who completed the course met competency in F13 and S14. (1 student did not meet criteria in F13; 1 dropped in S14.) | We are now offering only one section of this course, with streamlined assignments. See notes above. |

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| their own writing within that dialogue. | | | | |
| C. Students demonstrate the ability to communicate their ideas and support their interpretations effectively through oral presentations or performances. | Oral defense of thesis or project | All students pass oral defense | 100% students met competency. 11 students presented projects or defended theses successfully. 2 with "High Pass" or "Distinction." | I plan to continue encouraging students to work with faculty on preparation. |
| 3. Critical Thinking Skills | | | | |
| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2014-15 |
| A. Students make critical connections between relevant components of their major discipline(s). | Comprehensive exams-- each exam includes 3 essays evaluated with "high pass," "pass," "low pass," or "fail" | All students must receive "low pass," "pass," or "high pass" in all essays of exam | 100% students met competency. All 12 students passed Comprehensive Exam; 5 students had to retake one section, but then were given passing score. | I plan to continue encouraging students to work with faculty on preparation. |
| B. Students critically examine the content of their field(s) from within a broader perspective of liberal arts. | Comprehensive exams-- each exam includes 3 essays evaluated with "high pass," "pass," "low pass," or "fail" | All students must receive "low pass," "pass," or "high pass" in all essays of exam | 100% students met competency. All 12 students passed Comprehensive Exam; 5 students had to retake one section, but then were given passing score. | I plan to continue encouraging students to work with faculty on preparation. |

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| C. Students critically examine their major disciplinary field(s) from an applied ethics perspective, addressing important ethical issues or questions in their area(s) of study. | Project in core Ethics course | 100% of students get “B” or higher on project | 100% students who completed courses met competency. (1 student in S13 ENG 6939 dropped course.) | Summer course will be offered in Spring semester in 14-15; Instructor of ENG 6939 plans to change key assignment to smaller reports. |
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4. Civic Engagement

| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2014-15 |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| A. Students engage in productive community-based experience to promote increased awareness of issues relevant to area(s) of study, share the skills and knowledge they have learned in the classroom with others and, in return, gain experience and developing hands-on skills from others in the community, and demonstrate the ability to reflect on these experiences in support of the other learning outcomes above. | Student project (alternative to thesis) that deals with work in community. | 100% of students pass project defense | 100% students met competency. 5 students completed community-based projects; 1 a community-based thesis. | Continue to encourage students to work on these kinds of projects when appropriate to their areas of study. |

Academic Learning Compacts: 2014 – 2015

“... to ensure student achievement in undergraduate and graduate degree programs ...”

Academic Program:

Person Responsible:

| 1. Content/Discipline Skills | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|----------------------|----------|--|
| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2015-16 |
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*Please include multiple assessments. For example: students perform well on classroom assignments, norm-referenced tests/surveys, and they get accepted to graduate school or are employed.

| 2. Communication Skills | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2015-16 |
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| 3. Critical Thinking Skills | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2015-16 |
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| 4. Civic Engagement: | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Goals/Objectives | Means of Assessment/ Corroborating Evidence* | Criteria for Success | Findings | Plan for Use of Findings in 2015-16 |
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Attachment 1
USF St. Petersburg
Strategic Goals and Objectives, 2009-2013

1 – Academic Performance

Support and enhance programs that prepare students to be knowledgeable, reflective and engaged citizen scholars

- 1.1 Use sustained evidence of student learning outcomes and student achievement for continuous improvement
- 1.2 Offer certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs that meet regional needs
- 1.3 Implement and support information and instructional technologies that facilitate effective pedagogies
- 1.4 Enhance programs that specifically support academic excellence
- 1.5 Increase student awareness of participating in a global society

2 – Student Engagement

Enhance learning and achievement and promote retention through active engagement in curricular and co-curricular programs

- 2.1 Create a freshman experience that enables students to thrive and move successfully through to graduation
- 2.2 Foster institutional pride and strengthen connections within the campus community
- 2.3 Enhance opportunities for increased student involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities

3 – Diversity and Inclusion

Create a vibrant, inviting, and enriching university community that values and respects all individuals and whose students, faculty, and staff represent the diversity of its region

- 3.1 Ensure an inclusive community where differences are respected and valued
- 3.2 Attract and retain a diverse student population
- 3.3 Increase the diversity of faculty and staff

4 – Research and Creative Activities

Encourage faculty research and creative activities, and engage students in local, national and international scholarship

- 4.1 Create a vibrant culture of faculty research and creative scholarship
- 4.2 Promote and support undergraduate research as a meaningful aspect of campus life
- 4.3 Enhance and support research and scholarly collaborations with community partners

5 – Environmental Stewardship

Foster stewardship of the environment and embody the values of sustainability

- 5.1 Enhance sustainability through energy conservation and recycling
- 5.2 Create a community that champions environmental awareness and sustainable living

6 – Administrative and Financial Stewardship

Enhance revenue, provide effective and efficient financial management, and ensure institutional sustainability

- 6.1 Create and obtain funding streams to support short and long term initiatives
- 6.2 Increase private and corporate funding
- 6.3 Strengthen academic infrastructure of the university to ensure the proper alignment of instruction, services, and student life
- 6.4 Strengthen institutional infrastructure for the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff
- 6.5 Evaluate and improve facilities and processes that foster services to faculty, students, staff, and the community