

Assessment Table Template

Program: Honors and Undergraduate Research				
Cycle: 2013-2014				
Outcome/Objective	Measure	Target	Finding	Action Plan
<p>Outcome: Participation in the Honors and Undergraduate Research core programs of the Honors Freshman Learning Community and the Undergraduate Research Scholars will provide students the opportunity to master the depth of knowledge required for their degrees, communicate effectively, and prepare to engage in lifelong learning.</p>	<p>The Honors Freshman Learning Community introduces students to the diverse resources available on campus to facilitate academic success, promotes co-curricular involvement, enhances communication skills, and encourages freshman Honors students to acquire social, cultural, and global competence. A central objective is to foster critical thinking skills in students. To assess how effective this program is in developing critical thinking skills, the Critical thinking Assessment Test (CAT) will be administered to a sample of freshman Honors students at the beginning and end of their freshman year.</p>	<p>Honors freshman CAT scores will be significantly greater at the end of the freshman year compared to the beginning of the freshman year.</p>	<p>In October of 2013 HUR administered the CAT to a randomly selected group of 33 Honors Freshman Learning Community students (pre-test) and again in April to a second subgroup of 13 of these original 33 (post-test). Data for the 13 students who took both tests were locally scored and then analyzed for pre/post differences by the CAIL at Tennessee Tech. As expected, our Honors students (on both the pre-test and post-test) performed significantly ($p < 0.001$) better than national averages. However, for the paired comparison, although the post-test mean (25.41) was higher than the pre-test mean (24.05) for the 13 students who took both, this difference was not significant at a 95% confidence level. However, the CAT report did provide a breakdown by skills that identified several skills that improved during the first year and several that did not.</p>	
<p>Outcome: Honors and Undergraduate Research programs will engage students in high impact educational practices that promote critical thinking, effective communication, personal and social responsibility, and collaborative learning.</p>	<p>Measure: Explorations, the Texas A&M Undergraduate journal, publishes original articles by TAMU students describing their scholarly and creative activities. Through its student editorial board, Explorations provides a unique opportunity for undergraduates to engage in the process of communicating the quality of undergraduate research at Texas A&M to the general public. As such, it provides an informative window onto student communication skills as well as the scope and quality of undergraduate research at Texas A&M. To determine how effectively Explorations is motivating students to communicate their research results to a broader audience, we will track the volume of submissions to Explorations from different colleges.</p>	<p>Over 100 Explorations submissions each year with at least 2 from each college.</p>	<p>We received 106 article/art submissions for the 2014 issue, broadly distributed across colleges, with the most again from Engineering (32) and Liberal Arts (31), followed by Agriculture (13), Science (11), Education (7), Veterinary Medicine (5), Geosciences (4), Architecture (4), and Galveston (2), but none from Business (and 2 unknown). Although this does not meet our goal of 2 from each college (a single college short) it still represents an improvement of breadth over last year, with substantial increases from Science, Architecture, and Geosciences.</p>	<p>In the past the Explorations article solicitation, review, editing, and layout work was organized by a single student Editorial Board with HUR faculty and staff supervision. Based on the observation that few article proposals were received from certain colleges with few representatives on the Editorial Board and that Board members had varying degrees of dedication to the review process, as well as the diminished engagement by HUR staff who had competing obligations, the Board will institute major changes in their organization, creating an Executive Board comprising the most dedicated members who will oversee journal operations, and an editorial Board who will review and compose the issue. Additionally, members of the Executive Board will institute a college liaison program to recruit students to represent Explorations within each college, to be the contact that Executive Members will turn to for specific information and college-specific tasks. Finally, HUR committed to hiring a new staff member who is a former Explorations Board member, to assume additional responsibility for assuring that tasks are completed on time.</p>
<p>Outcome: Students who participate in Honors and Undergraduate Research core programs will express satisfaction with the format and content of the programs by acknowledging that these activities contributed toward their achieving learning outcomes for undergraduate studies.</p>	<p>Measure: Honors Advising Survey</p>	<p>75% of Honors students agree or strongly agree in a postadvising survey that all their questions were satisfactorily answered.</p>	<p>Of the 714 student appointments made between August 1, 2013 and May 31, 2014, 120 (17%) completed a post-advising survey. Of those that responded, 118 (98%) answered Agree or Strongly Agree that their questions were answered in their advising appointment.</p>	