



Memorandum

To: Department Chairs and Program Directors supporting concentrations

From: Suzanne Keen, Dean of Faculty and Vice President of Academic Affairs

Date: December 1, 2021

Subject: Senior Program Assessment 2020-21

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your continued participation in last year's senior project assessment exercise. It was lauded by the Middle States reaccreditation team, and it sets us up for progress in our continued work on assessing student learning outcomes.

During the 2020-21 academic year we conducted the third direct measures assessment of the Senior Program as a graduation requirement (in relation to Hamilton's eight educational goals and the curricular goals of each concentration). This memorandum shares the results with you so that your department or program can continue a conversation about how we can improve student learning in relation to the college's educational goals. General results include 1) near 100% reporting on the senior program assessment (36 of 37 concentrations – two students completing interdisciplinary concentrations were not assessed); 2) the overall response of N/A continued to decrease from 2018-19 and 2019-20 to 2020-21 in four key areas, *Aesthetic Discernment* (29.05% to 23.32%), *Creativity* (2.14% to 1.44%), *Understanding of Cultural Diversity* (41.43% to 33.65%), and *Ethical and Engaged Citizenship* (34.52% to 26.20%). These results are likely an outcome of more students seeking to do senior projects related to aesthetic discernment, creativity, understanding cultural diversity, and ethical and engaged citizenship.

Please recall the instructions on the assessment form: *The answers to the following questions are meant to be a reflection of how the student realized the goal, not whether the goal pertained to the project. A mark of N/A is an acceptable choice to indicate the senior project in your department or program provides no opportunity to assess this general educational goal. N/A should not be chosen to avoid a low score on an expected element of the work.*

The form also has this disclaimer: *The information acquired through this outcomes tool is solely collected to assess the College's senior program. All data will be reported in the aggregate. The data will not be*

linked to individuals, used for student or faculty evaluation, or be directly considered in the distribution of College resources.

Summary of Findings

The class of 2021 graduated 474 students in 36 concentrations. There was a reporting rate of 36 out of 37 concentrations (near 100% completion, only two students conducting interdisciplinary concentrations were not assessed) that graduated students. After the dataset was cleaned (removal of cases where the data were not complete or the form not filled out correctly), we received data from 502 student assessments (some students were assessed twice because they had double concentrations) from 832 total assessments (multiple faculty in a concentration assessed a single student).

The summary of results indicates that the Senior Program realizes the educational goals *Intellectual Curiosity, Analytic Discernment, Disciplinary Practice, Creativity, and Communication and Expression*, as well as the goal of the *Department or Program* (Figure 1 and Table 1).

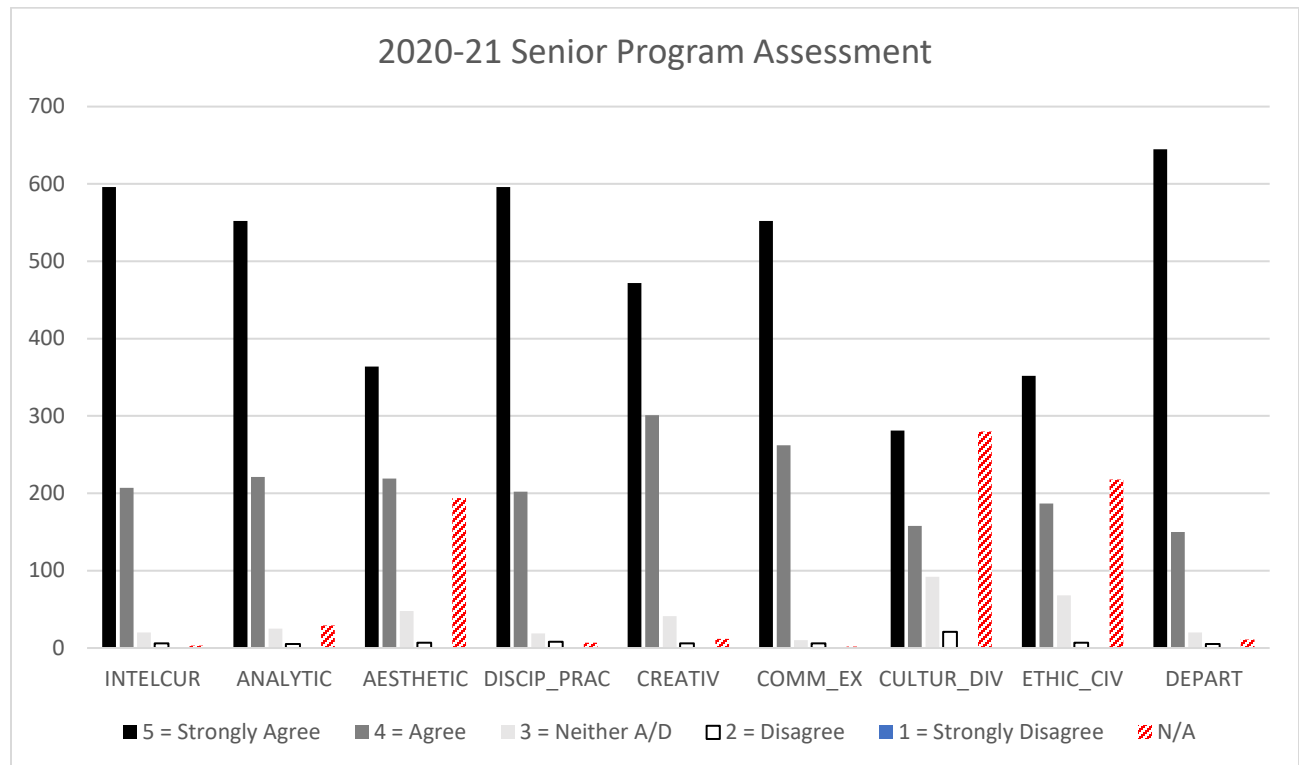


Figure 1. Aggregate results of the 2020-21 Senior Program assessment. Red stripe bars indicate N/A responses where there was less connection between the Senior Program and that particular educational goal. Black, dark grey, and light grey bars represent a connection between the educational goal and how well the student realized that particular goal.

Table 1. Frequencies of ratings by educational goal for the 2020-21 Senior Program Assessment graphed in Figure 1.

	5 = Strongly Agree	4 = Agree	3 = Neither A/D	2 = Disagree	1 = Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
INTELCUR	596	207	20	6	0	3	832
ANALYTIC	552	221	25	5	0	29	832
AESTHETIC	364	219	48	7	0	194	832
DISCIP_PRA	596	202	19	8	0	7	832
CREATIV	472	301	41	6	0	12	832
COMM_EX	552	262	10	6	0	2	832
CULTUR_DIV	281	158	92	21	0	280	832
ETHIC_CIV	352	187	68	7	0	218	832
DEPART	645	150	20	5	1	11	832
Total	4410	1907	343	71	1	756	

Three educational goals received a high number of N/A scores including *Aesthetic Discernment*, *Understanding of Cultural Diversity*, and *Ethical and Engaged Citizenship* (Figure 1 and Table 1). However, N/As were lower in all three of these educational goals as a percentage of the total responses in 2020-21 compared to the 2018-19 and 2019-20 assessments (Figure 2 and Table 2). The trend that N/A responses continue to drop may be because students are continuing to select projects that emphasize these educational goals. The result may also pertain to how the faculty rate these educational goals or recognize them being reflected in the senior project. Through future assessments we'll have a better understanding about whether these trends are meaningful.

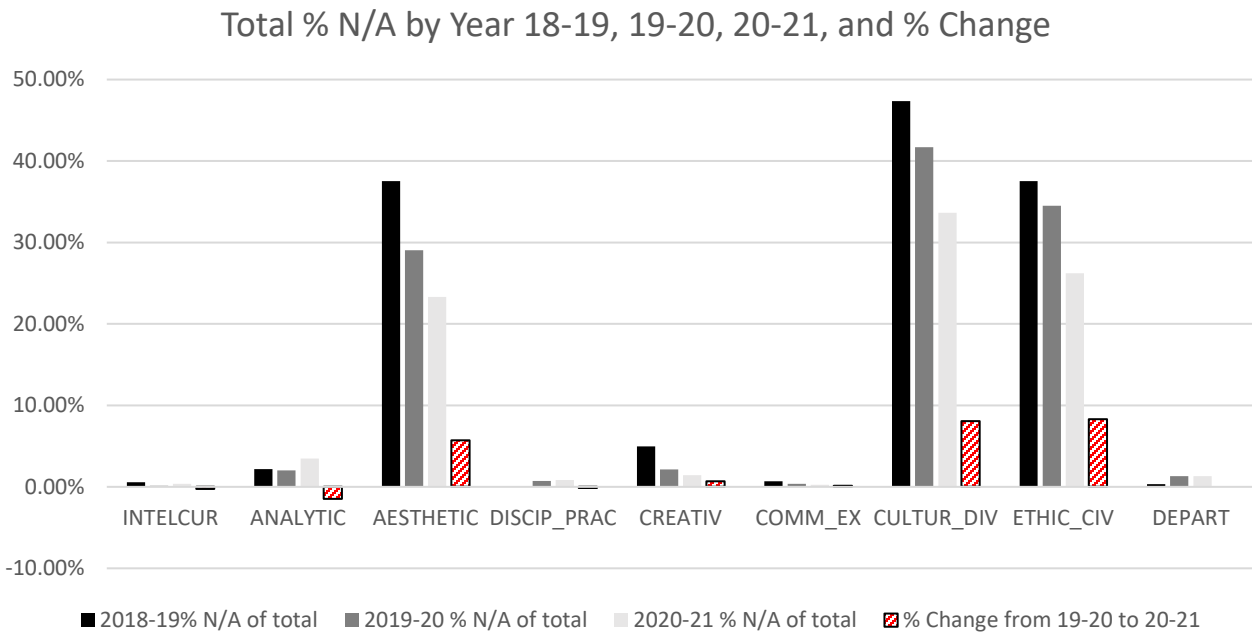


Figure 2. Percent of N/A responses by educational goal for the 2020-21 Senior Program Assessment.

Table 2. Summed percent by educational goal for the 2020-21 Senior Program Assessment graphed in Figure 2. Note those educational goals that are highlighted in green were reported with N/A lower in 2020-21 than in 2019-20 or 2018-19. The remaining educational goals were consistent over both years of assessment at <1.5% difference.

	2018-19% N/A of total	2019-20 % N/A of total	2020-21 % N/A of total	% Change from 19-20 to 20-21
INTELCUR	0.58%	0.12%	0.36%	-0.24%
ANALYTIC	2.19%	2.02%	3.49%	-1.47%
AESTHETIC	37.53%	29.05%	23.32%	5.73%
DISCIP_PRAC	0.00%	0.71%	0.84%	-0.13%
CREATIV	4.97%	2.14%	1.44%	0.70%
COMM_EX	0.69%	0.36%	0.24%	0.12%
CULTUR_DIV	47.34%	41.71%	33.65%	8.06%
ETHIC_CIV	37.53%	34.52%	26.20%	8.32%
DEPART	0.35%	1.32%	1.32%	0.00%

Another reflection indicates that we are continuing to decrease the amount of N/A responses in the goal of aesthetic discernment. At the same time, the goals of *Understanding Cultural Diversity* and *Ethical and Engaged Citizenship* made the highest change in N/A responses from the previous year. It is possible, with respect to the latter two, that the reasons for these decreases could be very different. The push towards thinking more about issues of diversity of inclusion (coming from faculty, students, but also from the world more broadly) might imply that there are more students who are completing Senior Projects who are addressing this educational goal, possibly in relationship to the further development of the SSIH requirement.

We are also providing you with the averaged data by concentration (Table 3). These data are to help you understand where your Senior Program aligns with all other concentrations. Remember, it is not meant to be evaluative for a department/program, its students, or faculty. It may be entirely appropriate to differ from the aggregate.

Please share this memo with your department members, and, when appropriate, have a conversation regarding our educational goals and student learning in your Senior Program at a department meeting. I want to thank all of you who took the time to participate in the assessment and for your efforts moving forward.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Keen
DOF

Table 3. *Aggregate data by concentration for the 2020-21 Senior Program Assessment.

DEPARTMENTPROGRAM	N=Total Resp	N=Total Students	AVG INTEL CUR	Total N=N/A	AVG ANALYTICAL	Total N=N/A	AVG AESTHETIC	Total N=N/A	AVG DISCIPLINAR	Total N=N/A	AVG CREATIVE	Total N=N/A	AVG COMMUNIC	Total N=N/A	AVG CULTURAL	Total N=N/A	AVG ETHICAL	Total N=N/A	AVG DEPART	Total N=N/A
Africana Studies	2	1	4.00		4.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00	5.00
Asian Studies	5	3	5.00		4.80		5.00	3.00	5.00		4.80		5.00		4.25	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	
American Studies	3	3	5.00		5.00		4.33		5.00		4.67		5.00		4.33		4.33		5.00	
Anthropology	36	10	4.57		4.35		3.97	6.00	4.49		4.30		4.59		4.32		4.37	2.00	4.59	
Art	9	9	4.44		4.25	1.00	4.56		4.67		4.78		4.56		5.00		4.78		4.89	
Art History	30	8	4.55		4.56	4.00	4.61		4.29	7.00	4.26		4.71		4.30	1.00	4.30		4.42	
Biochemistry / Molecular Biology	78	18	4.94		4.96		4.74	16.00	4.95		4.84	1.00	4.85		3.58	59.00	4.40	28.00	4.91	
Biology	66	27	4.93		4.91		4.93		4.91		4.91		4.89	1.00	3.65	51.00	3.50	51.00	4.87	
Chemistry	58	10	4.86		4.93		4.78	18.00	4.90		4.74	1.00	4.90		5.00	53.00	4.83	34.00	4.90	
Chinese	4	4	4.75		4.75		5.00	1.00	5.00		4.50		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00	
Cinema and Media Studies	11	11	4.82		4.36		4.73		4.64		4.55		4.55		4.20	1.00	4.73		4.70	1.00
Classics	6	3	4.83		4.83		4.67		5.00		4.83		5.00		4.67		4.67		4.83	
Computer Science	21	21	4.57		4.76		4.62		4.76		4.62		4.52		4.53	6.00	4.56	5.00	4.86	
Creative Writing	15	15	4.85		4.25	11.00	5.00		5.00		5.00		4.92		4.54	1.00	4.33	1.00	4.54	
Economics	67	67	4.79		4.64		4.62	14.00	4.73		4.63	8.00	4.70		4.80	11.00	4.82	12.00	4.85	
Environmental Studies	35	21	4.37		4.20		3.86	13.00	4.29		4.09	1.00	4.34		4.11	8.00	4.31		4.46	
French and Francophone Studies	16	16	4.81		4.63		4.50		4.69		4.75		4.63		5.00		4.71	2.00	4.81	
Geosciences	7	7	3.86		3.86		4.14		3.71		3.86		4.43		4.00		4.00		4.00	
German Studies	4	4	5.00		5.00		4.75		5.00		5.00		5.00		3.00		3.50		5.00	
Government	51	51	4.49		4.51		5.00	48.00	4.25		4.18	1.00	4.52	1.00	4.47	4.00	4.71		4.82	
Hispanic Studies	19	19	4.68		4.76		4.74		4.74		4.79		4.68		4.89		4.76	2.00	4.84	
History	15	15	4.87		4.75	7.00	4.75	11.00	4.67		4.93		4.73		4.67		4.71	1.00	4.73	
Interdisciplinary Concentration	1	1	4.00		4.00		0.00	1.00	4.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		0.00	1.00
Japanese	3	2	4.33		4.33		5.00	1.00	5.00		5.00		5.00		3.00	2.00	4.00	1.00	5.00	
Literature and Creative Writing	16	16	4.63		4.58	4.00	4.75		4.69		4.50		4.81		4.40	1.00	4.33	1.00	4.93	1.00
Mathematics and Statistics	46	46	4.35		4.70		4.08	22.00	4.65		4.35		4.52		4.83	40.00	4.67	34.00	4.65	
Music	6	6	4.83		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		4.83		3.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	
Neuroscience	33	16	4.73		4.64		4.13	2.00	4.67		4.39		4.58		3.64	11.00	4.00	4.00	4.67	
Philosophy	19	18	4.63		4.42		4.00	5.00	4.53		4.53		4.63		3.78	1.00	4.42		4.68	
Physics	23	22	4.96		5.00		4.08	11.00	4.96		4.04		4.00		4.00	18.00	3.80	17.00	5.00	
Psychology	69	38	4.49		4.32		3.93		4.64		4.06		4.32		3.70	10.00	4.13	7.00	4.71	
Religious Studies	12	3	4.92		4.92		4.67		4.83		4.67		4.67		4.75		4.60	2.00	4.92	
Russian Studies	2	2	5.00		5.00		4.50		4.50		5.00		5.00		5.00		4.50		5.00	
Sociology	20	12	4.45		4.40		4.00	10.00	4.60		4.00		4.40		3.85		4.24	3.00	4.45	
Theatre	5	5	4.60		4.60		5.00		4.80		5.00		4.40		3.60		4.00		4.60	
Women's and Gender Studies	6	6	3.67		4.67		3.00	2.00	3.83		4.00		4.17		3.50		3.83		3.33	
World Politics	10	10	4.90		4.50		0.00	10.00	4.30		4.60		4.80		4.80		5.00		3.67	7.00

* The organization of data in Table 3 is as follows: Column 1 = Concentration, Column 2 = Total Number of Responses (some departments/programs had multiple raters assess each student), Column 3 = The Total Number of Students reflected in the Total Number of Responses (if a student had more than one rating those ratings were averaged; the total for Column 3 across all departments/programs is greater than 493 due to double concentrators), Columns 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 are the averaged data from the Total Number of Responses (Column 2) for the eight educational goals and the department/program goals. Columns 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, and 21 are the total number of N/A scores from the Total Number of Responses (Column 2) for each educational goal and department/program goal.