Memorandum

To: Department Chairs and Program Directors supporting concentrations

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

Date: September 15, 2020

Subject: Senior Program Assessment 2019-20

Dear Colleagues,

During the 2019-20 academic year we conducted the second 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. Two improvements from the previous assessment in 2018-19 include: 1) the college achieved 100% reporting on the senior program assessment (35 of 35 concentrations); 2) the overall response of N/A decreased from 2018-19 to 2019-20 in four key areas, *Aesthetic Discernment* (37.53% to 29.05%), *Creativity* (4.97% to 2.14%), *Understanding of Cultural Diversity* (47.34% to 41.71%), and *Ethical and Engaged Citizenship* (37.53% to 34.52%). Speaking to the former of these outcomes, I thank you all for taking the time to fill out the assessment of our seniors. The latter outcome may have been influenced by our three Committee of the Whole discussions that occurred in faculty meetings last year. I remind you that, as a result of those conversations, we revised the preamble to our Educational Goals, indicating that a Hamilton education includes co-curricular and extracurricular activity. We also discussed revisiting the descriptions of our eight Educational Goals. I hope that we can follow up on that ambition in the coming years.

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 2020 graduated 493 students in 36 concentrations. There was a reporting rate of 36 out of 36 concentrations (100% completion) that graduated students. After the dataset was cleaned (cases where the data were not complete or the form not filled out correctly), we received data from 597 student assessments (some students were assessed twice because they had double concentrations).

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).
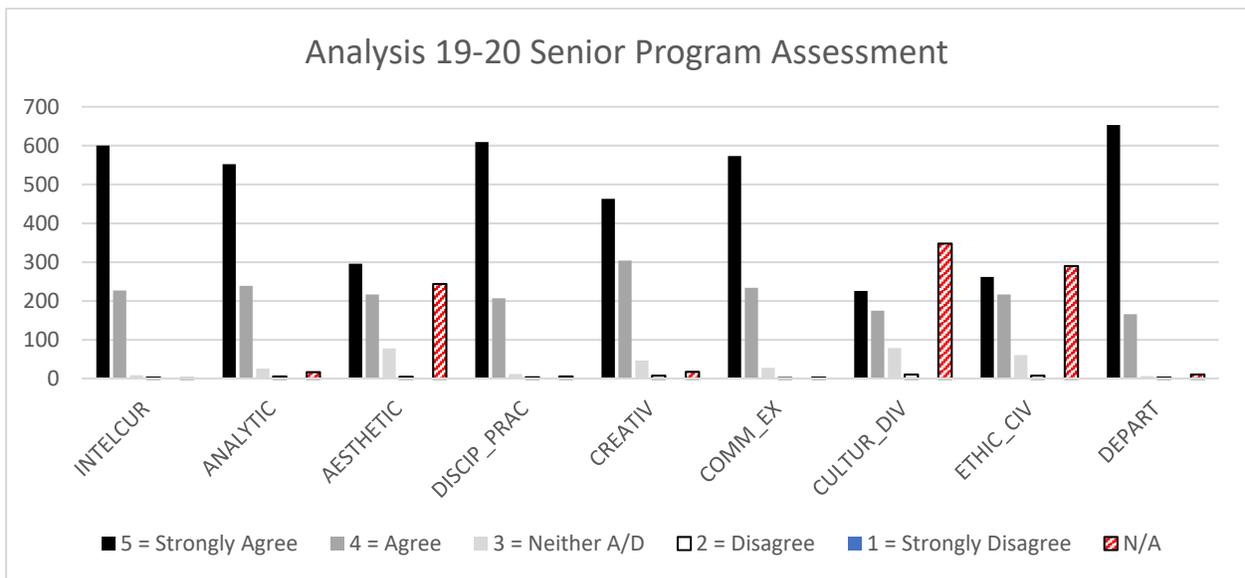

Figure 1. Aggregate results of the 2019-20 Senior Program assessment. Red stripe bars indicate N/A responses where there was less connection between the Senior Program and that particular educational goal. Black, dark grey, and light grey bars represent a connection between the educational goal and how well the student realized that particular goal.

Table 1. Frequencies of ratings by educational goal for the 2019-20 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	600	227	9	3	0	1	840
ANALYTIC	552	239	26	6	0	17	840
AESTHETIC	296	217	78	5	0	244	840
DISCIP_PRAC	609	207	12	4	2	6	840
CREATIV	463	304	47	8	0	18	840
COMM_EX	573	234	28	2	0	3	840
CULTUR_DIV	226	175	79	11	1	348	840
ETHIC_CIV	262	217	61	8	2	290	840
DEPART	653	166	7	3	0	11	840
Total	4234	1986	347	50	5	938	

Three educational goals received a higher 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 2019-20 compared to the 2018-19 assessment (Figure 2 and Table 2). These three educational goals were the subject of three Committee of the Whole conversations at separate Faculty Meetings during the 2019-20 Academic Year. These conversations may have contributed to a more nuanced appreciation of how each goal could be met by the Senior Program in the concentrations. The educational goal of *Creativity* also received a lower number of N/A marks in 2019-20 than in 2018-19, even though no Committee of the Whole discussion at a Faculty Meeting was focused on this educational goal.
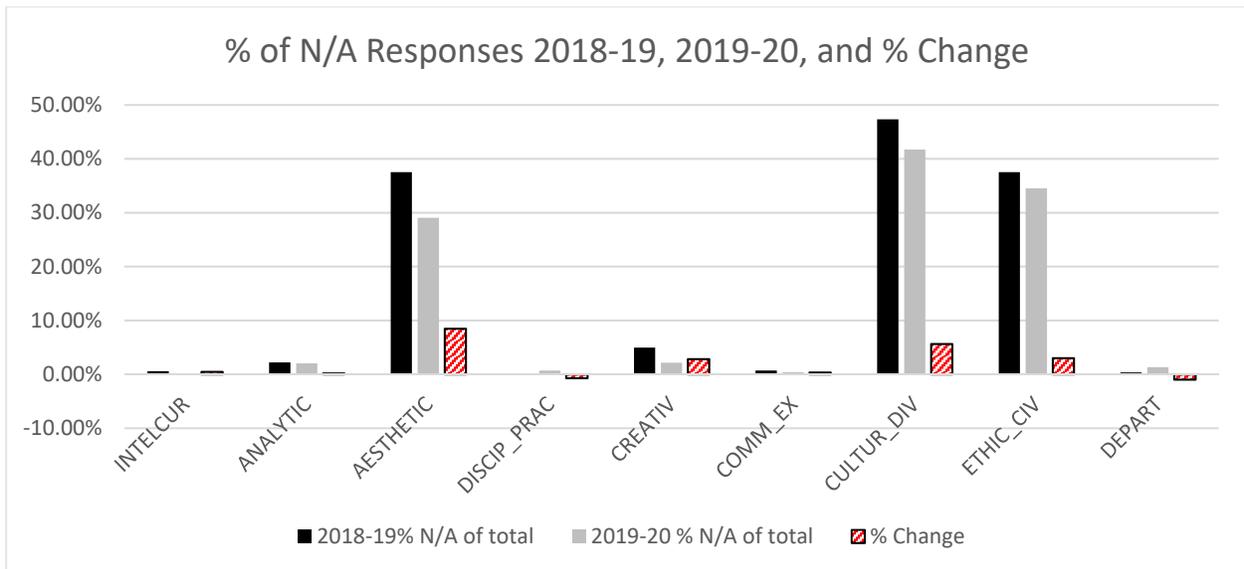

Figure 2. Percent of N/A responses by educational goal for the 2019-20 Senior Program Assessment.

Table 2. Summed percent by educational goal for the 2019-20 Senior Program Assessment graphed in Figure 2. Note those educational goals that are highlighted in green *were reported with N/A lower in 2019-20 than in 2018-19. The remaining educational goals were consistent over both years of assessment at <1% difference.*

	2018-19% N/A of total	2019-20 % N/A of total	% Change
INTELCUR	0.58%	0.12%	0.46%
ANALYTIC	2.19%	2.02%	0.17%
AESTHETIC	37.53%	29.05%	8.48%
DISCIP_PRAC	0.00%	0.71%	-0.71%
CREATIV	4.97%	2.14%	2.83%
COMM_EX	0.69%	0.36%	0.33%
CULTUR_DIV	47.34%	41.71%	5.63%
ETHIC_CIV	37.53%	34.52%	3.01%
DEPART	0.35%	1.32%	-0.98%

Another reflection indicates that two of the changes in the percent of N/A responses are relatively small (*Creativity* and *Ethical and Engaged Citizenship*), but two are quite large (*Aesthetic Discernment* and *Understanding Cultural Diversity*). It is possible in 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 actually are more students who are completing Senior Projects that are addressing this educational goal in relationship to the implementation of the SSIH requirement. On the other hand, there are probably not so many more senior projects that have changed in their content with regards to *Aesthetic Discernment*, but instead, faculty evaluators have become more broad in their thinking about what constitutes *Aesthetic Discernment* (perhaps partly due to one of the Committee of the Whole discussions at one Faculty Meeting).

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 2019-20 Senior Program Assessment.*

DEPARTMENTPROGRAM	N=Total Resp	N=Total Students	AVG INTELCUR	Total N=N/A	AVG ANALYTI	Total N=N/A	AVG AESTHETI	Total N=N/A	AVG DISCIP_PRAC	Total N=N/A	AVG CREATI	Total N=N/A	AVG COM	Total N=N/A	AVG CULTURDI	Total N=N/A	AVG ETHIC_CIT	Total N=N/A	AVG DEPAR	Total N=N/A
Africana Studies	3	3	5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00	
Anthropology	7	7	4.57		4.29		4.14		4.29		4.00		4.29		4.43		4.67	1.00	4.71	
Art	12	12	4.83		4.75		4.83		4.75		4.67		4.75		4.64	1.00	4.60	2.00	4.92	
Art History	5	5	5.00		4.20		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		4.80		4.60		5.00	
Asian Studies	15	3	4.60		4.22	6.00	4.46	2.00	4.21	1.00	4.20		4.47		4.53		4.31	2.00	4.47	
Biochemistry / Molecular Biology	71	13	4.86		4.77		4.74	24.00	4.83		4.75		4.76		4.80	66.00	4.42	52.00	4.87	1.00
Biology	107	23	4.79		4.70	6.00	4.39	32.00	4.78	1.00	4.62	1.00	4.73		3.75	103.00	4.06	75.00	4.91	
Chemistry	58	10	4.95		4.88		4.75	34.00	4.89	1.00	4.67	1.00	4.86		3.78	39.00	4.55	36.00	4.95	
Chinese	10	10	4.80		4.50		4.67	1.00	4.60		4.60		4.80		4.90		4.80		4.80	
Cinema and Media Studies	1	1	5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		4.00		4.00		5.00		3.00	
Classics	12	6	4.83		4.83		4.63	4.00	4.83		4.75		4.75		4.50	2.00	4.29	5.00	4.75	
Computer Science	53	18	4.72		4.77		4.77		4.83		4.72		4.81		4.02	12.00	4.02	12.00	4.92	
Creative Writing	16	16	4.69		4.15	3.00	4.88		4.69		4.88		4.81		4.08	3.00	3.93	1.00	4.70	6.00
Dance and Movement Studies	1	1	5.00		4.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		4.00		5.00	
Economics	86	86	4.53		4.57		4.07	12.00	4.57		4.27	1.00	4.52		4.19	2.00	4.35		4.50	
Environmental Studies	28	11	4.54		4.14		4.38	4.00	4.54		4.50		4.32		4.04	3.00	4.22	1.00	4.75	
French and Francophone Studies	15	11	4.93		4.80		4.43		4.93		4.67		4.80		4.73		4.69	2.00	5.00	
Geosciences	23	13	4.78		4.70		4.43		4.78		4.61		4.78		3.83		4.09		4.87	
Government	32	32	4.68	1.00	4.71	1.00	3.00	19.00	4.53		4.33	2.00	4.44		4.28	3.00	4.59		4.88	
Hispanic Studies	15	15	4.50		4.50		4.50	2.00	4.47	1.00	4.19		4.69		4.81		4.60	1.00	4.69	
History	12	12	4.67		4.42		4.00	9.00	4.50		4.10	2.00	4.33		5.00	7.00	4.38	4.00	4.50	
Interdisciplinary Concentration	2	2	5.00		4.50		4.50		4.50		4.50		4.50		5.00		5.00		4.00	1.00
Linguistics	1	1	5.00		5.00		4.00		4.00		4.00		4.00		3.00		4.00		5.00	
Literature and Creative Writing	24	24	4.75		4.17		4.67		4.58		4.33		4.67		4.00	3.00	4.05	5.00	4.79	
Mathematics and Statistics	22	22	4.68		4.95		3.93	7.00	5.00		4.40	7.00	4.86		5.00	14.00	5.00	14.00	5.00	
Music	8	8	5.00		4.875		4.875		4.875		5		5		3	1	1	7	4.6101	
Neuroscience	40	22	4.18		4.43		4.09	6.00	4.63		4.05		4.13		4.07	25.00	3.80	20.00	4.38	
Philosophy	12	12	4.83		4.83		4.17	6.00	4.83		4.67		4.58		3.86	5.00	4.90	2.00	4.83	
Physics	12	15	5.00		5.00			15.00	5.00		5.00		4.93			15.00		15.00	5.00	
Psychology	65	33	4.43		4.43		3.54	15.00	4.58		4.06		4.51		3.72	22.00	3.98	11.00	4.62	
Public Policy	17	17	4.82		4.69		0.00	17.00	4.40	2.00	4.43	3.00	4.50	3.00	4.43	10.00	4.55	6.00	5.00	3.00
Religious Studies	18	5	4.83		4.50		4.56	9.00	4.56		4.53	1.00	4.72		4.78		4.76	1.00	4.72	
Russian Studies	3	3	5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00	
Sociology	22	22	4.55		4.59		4.50	20.00	4.59		4.18		4.59		4.64		5.00	14.00	4.59	
Women's and Gender Studies	5	5	5.00		5.00		3.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00		5.00	
World Politics	3	3	4.33		4.00		0.00	3.00	4.00		4.33		4.67		4.67		4.67		4.33	

* 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.