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| **Assurance of Student Learning Report****2023-2024** |
| *Ogden College* | *Earth, Environmental & Atmospheric Sciences* |
| *Geosciences 072* |
| *Jason Polk* |
| ***Is this an online program***? [ ]  Yes [x]  No | Please make sure the Program Learning Outcomes listed match those in CourseLeaf . Indicate verification here [x]  Yes, they match! (If they don’t match, explain on this page under **Assessment Cycle)** |

**\*\*\* Please include Curriculum Map as part of this document (at the end), NOT as a separate file.**

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| ***Use this page to list learning outcomes, measurements, and summarize results for your program. Detailed information must be completed in the subsequent pages. Add more Outcomes as needed.*** |
| **Program Student Learning Outcome 1:**  Students graduating from the Geoscience program will develop an applied skillset and breadth of knowledge about the complexity and diversity of local and global human-environmental interactions, as well an understanding their geospatial relationships. |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of written comprehensive exam |
| **Instrument 2** | Indirect: Success in core coursework (GEOS 500, 502, 520) |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.** | **[x]  Met** | **[ ]  Not Met** |
| **Program Student Learning Outcome 2:**  Using the evidence and argument approach, students who graduate with a geoscience degree will demonstrate marketable communication, analytical/research, and problem-solving skills as evidenced through written and oral demonstration of their theses. |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of written graduate thesis |
| **Instrument 2** | Direct: Analysis of oral graduate defense performance |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.** | **[x]  Met** | **[ ]  Not Met** |
| **Program Student Learning Outcome 3:**  Students can demonstrate the capacity to fit comprehensive geospatial, geological, meteorological, and/or environmental knowledge and training within broader contexts (broader impacts) relevant in communities or societies. |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of research thesis applicability to field and broader impacts. |
| **Instrument 2** | Indirect: Level of community and regional engagement in research activity and productivity in application to problem solving |
| **Instrument 3** | Indirect: Success in job placement and/or admission/completion of doctoral programs. |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | **[x]  Met** | **[ ]  Not Met** |
| **Assessment Cycle Plan:**  |
| All SLO goals were not only met, but exceeded expectations for the review period. As such, no specific follow-up actions are required. Updated reviews of current SLO’s indicate steady progress and success in meeting them through continued adaptation of the program to meet evolving student and market needs. The program’s focal areas are constantly being reviewed to ensure they align with employer needs and national trends in the Geosciences; these are obtained through the American Geosciences Institute (AGI) and other related professional organizations (Esri for GIS, Geological Society of America, American Geophysical Union, American Meteorological Society). Faculty maintain contact with program graduates, often having them return as speakers to the core graduate classes (GEOS 500) to provide insight on future employment opportunities for current students, as well as to consult with faculty on evolving discipline needs. We informally monitor graduates who seek professional designations (Professional Geologist, GIS Professional) after graduation to track their success, with most achieving their goal within 3-5 years of graduation. Doctoral program acceptances since last ASL are 100% for those who applied and are currently in, or have completed, a Ph.D. in the Geosciences. Key areas of professional growth, which are also focal points of our program, include energy, water resources, environment/sustainability, geophysics, and GIS, with a 100% job placement rate in these fields based on alumni data since 2019. Needs for learned skills and cohort interests are gauged in GEOS 500 and used to adapt offerings for the following year for elective courses and for core coursework in GEOS 502 and 520. The program’s faculty constantly interact with potential employers and doctoral program advisees, as well as a broad network of alumni, to seek critical feedback on changing workforce and academic demands. Alumni visit the Department each semester and provide several local and regional linkages to ensure employability and relevant training for students. Each year, we review the program course offerings, continually updating the 5-year rotation to meet the needs for technical skills and academic preparation. Based on feedback from graduates from the 2021-2023 cohorts, we have moved GEOS 520 to the third semester (every other Fall) of a typical program, which will help students use their own thesis data in learning applied stats. We conducted our first informal alumni survey for those who graduated previously, with whom we’ll follow up in 5 years to collect data on program linkages to future employment and graduate school success. |

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| **Program Student Learning Outcome 1** |
| **Program Student Learning Outcome**  | Students graduating from the Geoscience program will develop an applied skillset and breadth of knowledge about the complexity and diversity of local and global human-environmental interactions, as well an understanding their geospatial relationships. |
| **Measurement Instrument 1**  | Direct: Analysis of written comprehensive exam, which includes closed and open book questions from the entire faculty related to the student’s research and graduate coursework through a one-day process. |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Successfully answering all the questions provided on the written exam based on evaluation by the advisor and faculty participating in the process. Grading is on a Pass/Conditional Pass/Fail basis. Pass indicates a full and complete answer, with demonstrated mastery of the subject and clear, concise written evidence of this knowledge. Conditional Pass indicates familiarity with the subject and addressing of the question, but lacking a sufficient level of detail or completeness to earn a Pass. Fail indicates an incomplete or unsatisfactory answer that does not address the question in enough detail or depth of knowledge. |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | 90% Pass Rating | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% |
| **Methods**  | Written exam answers for each student are evaluated using a Pass/Conditional Pass/Fail criteria and students must successfully pass all questions in order to continue in the program. All comprehensive exams completed in AY24 were evaluated to measure this SLO (n=9). |
| **Measurement Instrument 2** | Indirect: Success in core coursework (GEOS 500, 502, 520) |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Successfully passing the core courses with required grade of A or B |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | 90% Pass Rating | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% |
| **Methods** | All student grades based on students enrolled in the core courses (n=8) were evaluated. Students met all criteria in the courses and their individual SLO’s in order to achieve passing grades |
| **Based on your results, highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.** | **[x]  Met** | **[ ]  Not Met** |
| **Results, Conclusion, and Plans for Next Assessment Cycle (Describe what worked, what didn’t, and plan going forward)** |
| Results are as expected with 100% of students meeting target goal. Course content and sequencing based on improvements over the last two assessment cycles have worked well. This program was assessed in Spring 2024 and after the results of the formal program review recommendations were discussed, the faculty voted to eliminate the comprehensive exam beginning in Fall 2024.  |

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| **Program Student Learning Outcome 2** |
| **Program Student Learning Outcome**  |  |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of graduate thesis, which involves producing an original, written committee-reviewed and approved body of scientific research that has direct application in the geosciences and includes a literature review, data report, and interpretation and synthesis of the results with full references. Students must demonstrate depth of knowledge on the subject. The rigor expected is to produce publishable work and is deemed acceptable based on the scientific expertise and evaluation of the graduate faculty committee. |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Criteria for evaluation include an effective written original research thesis. At the conclusion of the program, the student must produce a defendable, well-written, fully-referenced, publishable graduate thesis on a topic within the geosciences that meets the approval of the advisor and faculty committee of experts (minimum of three). Metrics of quality evaluated by the committee (with the potential for input from the entire graduate faculty as part of the public review process) for an acceptable thesis include: 1) clear and focused research question(s); 2) synthesized and complete literature review; 3) appropriate methodology as approved by the committee; 4) competent data collection and analysis; 4) demonstrated competency in discussing data and results; and 5) appropriate and thorough references, correct grammar and syntax, and proper formatting as required by the Graduate School. Other specific guidelines for style, formatting, length, and related criteria are provided in the Geoscience Graduate Handbook. |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | 90% | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% |
| **Methods**  | 100% of full-time student written thesis during the assessment period were assessed. All students produced a passing thesis and completed the oral defense successful during the review period.  |
| **Measurement Instrument 2** | Direct: Analysis of graduate thesis oral defense, which involves orally defending an original, committee-reviewed and approved body of scientific research that has direct application in the geosciences. Students must demonstrate depth of knowledge on the subject by addressing questions from committee members after presenting their research. |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Oral thesis evaluation rubric includes the following metrics: 1) Quality of oral presentation based on visual appeal, succinctness, and clarity; 2) quality of information included (organization, content relevance and accuracy, evidence-based methods justification); 3) quality of oral presentation (flow, clarity, delivery); 4) adherence to scientific method; 5) ability to answer questions accurately. Students must demonstrate knowledge of research application to the field, be able to argue strengths and weaknesses of results, and successfully defend against questions regarding the thesis by committee. The committee of 3-4 faculty evaluate criteria on a Pass/Conditional Pass/Fail scoring system. |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | 100% | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% |
| **Methods** | 100% of full-time student oral defenses during the assessment period were assessed. All students produced a passing thesis and completed the oral defense successful during the review period (n=4). |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.** | **[x]  Met** | **[ ]  Not Met** |
| **Results, Conclusion, and Plans for Next Assessment Cycle (Describe what worked, what didn’t, and plan going forward)** |
| **Results**: As all measurements met targets, no actions are required. **Conclusions**: Committee admissions to ensure high quality students and a streamlined and strategic sequence of courses and thesis requirements and deadlines, along with steady student support and Department Chair oversight of program metrics have resulted in continued success for the program and meeting 100% of the target goals for this SLO. **Plans for Next Assessment Cycle**: This program will be assessed again in Spring 2025 after the next cohort of 2-year students will complete their cycle. It will include the exit surveys, course content surveys for core courses (GEOS 500, 502, 520), and ancillary data collected from evaluations and other student success metrics (thesis completion time and quality, recruiting efforts, etc.).  |

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| **Program Student Learning Outcome 3** |
| **Program Student Learning Outcome**  | Students can demonstrate the capacity to fit comprehenseive geospatial, geological, meteorological, and/or environmental knowledge and training within broader contexts (broader impacts) relevant in communities or societies. |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of broader applicability of thesis. Theses must include a clear, comprehensive, and defendable broader impacts discussion of the applicability of the outcomes to the subject and/or society. The material must clearly describe how the narrow student research topic fits within the broader contexts of the geoscience discipline and how it is directly applicable to communities and societies not directly related to the completed study. Evaluation of the broader impact is completed by committee or 3-4 gradute faculty and is scored as Pass/Fail. |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Written thesis will be evaluated for content to ensure they are relevant to the Geosciences and meet the approval of the advisor and faculty committee of experts (minimum of three) as a novel and expert level contribution to the field of research. Metrics of quality evaluated by the committee include the broader impacts and relevance to society/subject field, which will be approved as Pass/Fail. |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | 90% | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% |
| **Methods**  | 100% of full-time student written thesis during the assessment period were assessed. All students produced a passing thesis and completed the oral defense successful during the teview period. |
| **Measurement Instrument 2** | Indirect: Level of community and regional engagement in research activity and productivity in application to problem solving |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Successfully application of thesis topics to student’s field and applicability to community and regional needs.  |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | 80% | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% |
| **Methods** | Each thesis is developed to provide students with topics and training that are directly relatable to the field of geoscience and targeted at applied problem-solving through rigorous data collection, analysis, and application to the field. All thesis completed during this period included an applied component and many involved direct partnerships or collaboration with outside entities. |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | **[x]  Met** | **[ ]  Not Met** |
| **Results, Conclusion, and Plans for Next Assessment Cycle (Describe what worked, what didn’t, and plan going forward)** |
| **Results**: As all measurement targets were met, no actions are required. **Conclusions**: Committee admissions to ensure high quality students and a streamlined and strategic sequence of courses and thesis requirements and deadlines, along with steady student support and Department Chair oversight of program metrics have resulted in continued success for the program and meeting 100% of the target goals for this SLO. Faculty commitment to applied research and engaging students has led to continued success in thesis defenses and completion in this program. **Plans for Next Assessment Cycle**: This program will be assessed again in Spring 2025 after the next cohort of 2-year students will complete their cycle. It will include the exit surveys, course content surveys for core courses (GEOS 500, 502, 520), and ancillary data collected from evaluations and other student success metrics (thesis completion time and quality, recruiting efforts, etc.). |

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