

2016-17 Department Student Success Plan Assessment Report

Department of Multidisciplinary Studies

Please answer the following questions in two pages and submit to your Dean by October 2. Your Dean will offer you feedback by Oct. 16 and advance final version¹ to Academic Affairs by October 20. This report will inform your 2017-18 Student Success Plan update that will be due to your Dean by Nov. 3. Previous report and plans can be found at this website: <http://irt2.indstate.edu/cms7/sp16/index.cfm/department-plans/>.

Person Primarily Responsible for Preparing this Report: Tina Kruger

1. Specific accomplishments/achievements this past year (*briefly explain using bullet points, noting any changed/adapted*):

- **Create sense of community:** Efforts have been made to promote student organizations (Philosophy Club, Student Coalition for Social Justice, Feminist Majority) and to create new clubs (Debate Club) and draw in students. We are in the process of arranging a Social Justice speaker (Jack Bratich will present on activism and social media on December 4, 2017). The promotion of student organizations facilitates the flowering of student-generated cultures on campus, which aligns with multiple departmental goals. We continue to collaborate on planning for Human Rights Day and had yet another highly successful Women's History Month Colloquium (with over 1,200 attendees, including involvement of 35 classes). We continually collaborate with a significant cadre of highly engaged affiliated faculty in the Gender Studies, International Studies, and Multidisciplinary Studies programs. These faculty are vital to the functioning and success of those programs, assisting with academic and co-curricular program planning, advising, serving on departmental committees, overseeing student organizations, and many other tasks and activities that facilitate the department accomplishing what needs to be done.
- **Demonstrate career opportunities in all programs:** Tri-fold brochures highlighting career opportunities have been or are being developed for each program in the department. Presentations were given to University College advisors and Admissions counselors regarding all programs in the department with a focus on career options and outcomes.
- **Establish regular tutoring opportunities:** A tutor has been identified by faculty in the Philosophy program to aid students struggling in a variety of PHIL courses. Zach Robtoy holds office hours at the Center for Student Success in Normal Hall for 12 hours per week and makes himself available by appointment as needed.
- **Create/Enhance Internal and External Scholarships:** Additional funds were allocated from the department budget as well as from the Dean's discretionary funds to provide two \$1,200 scholarships for International Studies students studying abroad in the 2017-2018 AY. All scholarship recipients were recognized at the Department of Multidisciplinary Studies' Spring Banquet and Awards Ceremony in April.
- **Incorporate Career Readiness Activities:** The department is planning a Careers Day for November 14, 2017. All programs will be present to highlight career opportunities students may pursue. Career readiness activities have been incorporated into SOC 302 and MST 401.
- **Complete Philosophy program revisions:** Revisions to the Philosophy major and minor are at the final stages of review in Curriculog. The assessment plan for the Philosophy major is under revision, as is required for the final approval.
- **Ensure Accurate and Useful Advising:** One-on-one trainings with department advisors took place in the spring. Advisors' names were sent to Holly Hobaugh for larger scale advising training.
- **Retention:** 1-year retention rates from Blue Reports indicate that, while we have few first time freshmen adopting majors in the department, we continue to retain them at a high level (100% of the first time freshmen who entered the Department of Multidisciplinary Studies in 2014, 2015, and 2016 were retained for at least one year).

¹ Dean will request a refinement to the report if it is not suitably addressing the questions. Report will be shared with Trustees.

- **Course completion:** According to data from Blue Reports, 83.71% of lower division and 85.36% of upper division courses were successfully completed in the Fall of 2016.
- **Graduation:** Our 4- and 6-year graduation rates are above the university average (33.33% of first time freshmen entering in 2013 who had majors in MDS graduated in 2017; 50% of first time freshmen entering in 2011 who had majors in MDS graduated in 2017), according to data from Blue Reports.
- **DFDr rates:** Efforts were made to enhance faculty's preparation to teach online courses and to address high DFDr rates. We saw a significant drop in DFDr rates for GNDR and PHIL courses (as was highlighted in the data sent by Josh Powers for those courses). DFDr rates were up for SOC courses, possibly due to changeover in faculty.

2. Objective/Actions Not Achieved (*briefly explain using bullet points*):

- We continue to identify majors outside of the department to explain how majors/minors within MDS complement those majors. We are working on developing a marketing plan to promote the department across campus and to potential students not yet enrolled at ISU. We plan to distribute brochures for programs in the department to advisors across the university (including the University College advisors).
- The department website has not yet been updated with career opportunities for students completing departmental programs. We are planning, as part of our marketing efforts, to revamp and update the MDS website, including adding detailed information regarding career options.
- Contact has not yet been made with department alumni. As part of department marketing efforts, we have requested a list of alumni from all departmental programs and will work to survey those individuals in the coming months. We will also invite alumni to share their stories (in podcasts or videos posted on the MDS website) and, potentially, come attend or present at departmental events such as the MDS careers day in November.

3. Attention areas going forward as informed by 2016-17 retention, completion, course completion ratio, credit hour productivity, and D/F/drop rate data provided as well as other Blue Report or departmental data (*briefly explain using bullet points*).

- We have low numbers of first time, full time freshmen entering the department. With our forthcoming marketing plan and efforts, we hope to see an increase in students coming to ISU to study Philosophy, Social Justice and Sociology, Gender Studies, and adopting department minors early on in their academic careers.
- We will continue efforts to keep students on track to graduate in 4 years through effective advising and prompt review of student-proposed MST majors.
- To work to improve course completion numbers, we will continue to explore what leads to students dropping courses and consider changes to course sequencing and prerequisites in order to set students up for success.
- We will monitor the high D/F/drop rate in SOC courses and make adjustments to the program's course offerings and delivery, as needed, to facilitate student success.
- We will explore opportunities for Social Justice students to pursue careers in a university setting. The SJS major aligns well with qualifications for university jobs, for example via internships in ISU's Center for Community Engagement. There are also personnel positions and positions in student services positions that are well suited for Social Justice Internships for majors and minors.
- We have discussed the possibility of an annual alumni award and will pursue the creation of such an honor. Giving such an award will help to keep alumni connected, allowing us to provide networking opportunities and enhancing career options for current students.