

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO**  
**ANNUAL PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Date: 10/10/2013  
**Due: 10/1/2013**

**I. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

**1. Name and Contact Information of Program Assessment Coordinator:**

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**2. Student Learning Outcomes**

**Undergraduate:**

- 1.1. Students can formulate geographic research questions.
- 1.2. Students can collect, compile, and interpret geographic data.
- 1.3. Students can present geographic data in a map.
- 2.1. Students can recognize the presence and application of regional, local and global dimensions of the social and physical worlds in the *landscape*.
- 2.2. Students can recognize the presence and application of regional, local and global dimensions of the social and physical worlds in *data*.
- 3.1. Students can explain interactions between the size and distribution of human and non-human populations, resources and the natural environment in historic and contemporary perspectives.
- 3.2. Students are cognizant of varying interpretations of causality, interaction, policy and values in human-environmental relationships.
- 3.3. Student will understand ways in which they use the environment can affect future generations and other human and natural systems.
- 4.1. Students can analyze information from different physical or social sciences from a geographic perspective.
- 4.2. Students can interpret popular media (novels, films, newspapers) from a geographic perspective.
- 5.1. Students provide appropriate geographic skills to community-based organizations and associations.
- 6.1. Students can use and cite scholarly sources of information correctly.
- 6.2. Students can write and speak clearly in the discipline of geography.

[http://www.csuchico.edu/apr/program\\_portfolios/behavioral\\_social-sci/geog/learning\\_outcomes.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/apr/program_portfolios/behavioral_social-sci/geog/learning_outcomes.shtml)

**3. Course Alignment Matrix:**

No matrix is used, it is a consensus-based approach for determining achievement of the SLO

#### 4. Learning Outcome(s) Assessed in AY 2012-2013:

Which SLOs were assessed this past year?

5.1. Students provide appropriate geographic skills to community-based organizations and associations.

#### 5. Assessment Methodology Used:

What kinds of assessment methods were used: embedded assessment of student work in a particular course? Type of assignment? Performance on standardized or other exams? Sample size? Sampling strategy? Who evaluated student performance? How was successful performance measured? Etc.

Three sources of data were utilized for this assessment; each provided different data for assessment of the SLO.

##### I. GEOG 389/489 Geography Internship

The assessment coordinator conducted analysis of sixteen Department Student Service Learning/Internship Plans for 2011-12, 2012-13 academic years. Student plans are filed in a binder in the office of the Department of Geography and Planning. The plans contain Information about internship site, type of internship, learning objectives and service objectives. Evaluation methods are set out on the plan form and include: regular meetings, field supervision, paper, written exam, log, readings, oral exam or other. These plans were helpful in determining which community organizations are being served and the types of skills that are being provided. Some of the plans had the internship description attached and five had the final paper, sample maps and a log of the semester prepared by the students at the conclusion of the internship. These were useful in determining the kinds of skills that were being provided.

A total of 16 Student Service Learning/Internship Plans were analyzed for this assessment.

- Fall 2011                    8 student plans
- Spring 2012                2 student plans
- Fall 2012                    3 student plans
- Spring 2013                3 student plans

Geography is a very broad discipline that takes a geographic approach to gain understanding and solve problems by creating and applying geographic knowledge and using the tools of geography. Spatial thinking is inherent to the geographic approach. Geographers are interested in location, place, human-environmental interaction, movement and regions. Many of the skills of geography are set out in the student learning outcomes set out on the previous page. Some geographic skills that are taught in our courses include map making (includes understanding coordinate systems), sampling, measuring and converting data, collection of GPS data, elementary and spatial statistics, aerial photo and satellite interpretation. We additionally teach planning courses and techniques. Planners help create a broad vision for the community. They also research, design, and develop programs; lead public processes; effect social change; perform technical analyses; manage; and educate. Some planners focus on just some of these roles, such as transportation planning, but most will work at many kinds of planning throughout their careers.

A spreadsheet was created from the plans and students objectives, goals and final reports (if attached) were qualitative coded to determine the kinds of skills that are being provided. Additionally information about the type of community organization was analyzed.

- ##### II. GEOG 405S Nature & Restoration -
- The assessment coordinator conducted analysis of the Ecological Reserves Internship Program filed in Internship Binder in department office and embedded assessment of a sample of five field journals for students serving as interns at the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve and/or Butte Creek Ecological Preserve provided an actual record of the activities that the students performed that were analyzed for this assessment.

- III. GEOG 498 Special Topics: Community Service Practice in Geography. This is a newly implemented community service course that has been taught in the department three times. It was initially taught as a special topic and the faculty approved adding the course to the curriculum to be offered in the fall semester with a rotating faculty schedule. The class conducted a bus stop survey in the spring 2013 semester. Five of the seven students in the class presented their findings at the Behavioral and Social Sciences Student Symposium in April 2013. The syllabus with learning objectives and assessment methods, data collection instrument and final presentation were analyzed for the purposes of this assessment.

**6. Assessment Results:**

Please describe outcomes of assessment. How well did students perform on the assessment task(s)? Feel free to use the table below to report results, adapting the table as necessary, and/or provide narrative describing the assessment results.

- I. Analysis of Department Student Service Learning/Internship Plans for 2011-12, 2012-13 academic years. A total of 16 Student Service Learning/Internship Plans were analyzed for this assessment as listed in 5-I above.

The matrix below summarizes the community organizations/associations that were provided services and the kinds of geographic services that were provided.

Community organization/association	#	GIS skills – data production & organization, analysis and maintenance of database, cartography, database management	Field data collection	Planning, work in planning office/dept	Curriculum, exercise or project development	Attend meetings, work with public
Geographic information Center (GIC)	5	x			x	
Center for Nutrition and Activity Promotion (CNAP)	1		x	x	x	x
United States Forest Service (USFS)	1	x	x	x		x
Butte County Planning Services	1			x	x	x
City of Chico – Parks Department	1	x	x	x	x	x
City of Chico – Planning	2	x	x	x	x	
Northern California Regional Land Trust (NCRLT)	3	x	x		x	x
Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve (BCCER) & Butte Creek Ecological Preserve (BCEP)	2		x		x	x

As the matrix above indicates, interns during the years 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic years served in a variety of community organizations and associations including centers associated with CSU, Chico (GIS & CNAP), to state, county and city governments (USFS, Butte County, City of Chico), non-profits (NCRLT) and natural reserves and preserves managed by CSU, Chico (BCCER & BCEP). The interns provided a wide variety of geographic and planning services to these organizations that included data production, database organization and management, and GIS analysis and mapping associated with GIS. Student interns were also involved in field data collection, planning activities including working in a planning office or department. Student interns also developed curriculum and exercises and were involved in project development. Many of the internships required the student interns to attend public meetings and work with members of the public.

As part of this assessment, data about the number of students enrolled in GEOG 389/489 internship courses during 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic years was collected. Analysis revealed that there was a mismatch between the roster of interns taking the courses and the Student Service Learning/Internship Plans filed in the department internship notebook. The table below summarizes the results.

	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Totals
# of students enrolled in GEOG 389/489 internship course	14	17	9	8	48
# of enrolled students with Service Learning/Internship Plans filed in binder	7	0	1	3	11
# of students enrolled w/out Service Learning/Internship Plans filed in binder	7	17	8	5	37

Thirty-seven students were registered for the internship courses, but did not have plans filed in the department notebook. Additionally there were students with plans filed that were not registered for GEOG 389/489 courses, but this is understandable as students may participate in internships for academic credit or not and may be paid a wage or not.

- II. The Ecological Reserves Internship Program clearing sets out the course format and description, learning objectives and outcomes, and assignment and grading for evaluation. The five field journals from students who participated in the Ecological Reserves internship program were useful in determining the kinds geographic services provided to the BCCER and BCEP. The students in this course keep a field journal of their activities at these two sites as part of the course.
- III. THE GEOG 498 Community Service Practice in Geography course developed a project to analyze the bus stops within a 2-mile radius of the Chico State campus in order to understand why student bus ridership is low and how it could be increased. The study was situated within the goals of the City of Chico 2020 Climate Action Plan. The students designed and implemented a field survey that evaluated the bus stops for sufficient lighting, line of sight, safety, and accessibility in terms of ADA compliance. The results were analyzed and mapped. The study, results and recommendations were presented by students in the course at the Spring BSS Symposium.

## 7. Analysis / Interpretation of Results

What did the results tell you about how well students were achieving your Student Learning Outcome expectations?

How were the results shared with faculty, students, and/or other stakeholders?

- I. Qualitative analysis of the data indicated that there was a wide variety of the types of geographic and planning skills that were provided by students in GEOG 389/489 and the data suggests that students are providing appropriate geographic skills to community-based organizations and associations. The projects that these students were engaged provided services that are highly valued by government agencies, non-profits and CSU, Chico centers in times of tight budgets in the current economy. They also provide students valuable, real-world experience in preparation for their careers.

The lack of Student Service Learning/Internship Plans for all students enrolled in GEOG 389/489 courses indicates that the implementation of student internships should be updated. The timing for this coincides with the charge for the CSU, Campus to create an off-campus internship policy that reflects EO 1064 guidelines.

II. The Ecological Reserves Internship Program clearly sets out the goals, expected outcomes and method of evaluation. The journals provided evidence that the students learned to apply skills related to land stewardship in areas of landscape ecology, fire ecology, biology, restoration ecology, horticulture, geology and geographic information systems. Students were involved in the development and delivery of environmental and cultural curriculum for K-12 education and educational material for the public. Students in this course provided appropriate geographic skills in that they conducted extensive field data collection, plant and animal identification, trail maintenance, removal of invasive species, restoration activities, report writing and field mapping that are an essential part of the functioning of the BCCER & BCEP.

III. The GEOG 498 Community Service Practice in Geography provides an opportunity for faculty to develop a service learning project to provide appropriate geographic skills to a community-based organization or association. Its intent is well aligned with SLO 5.1. The project conducted by the students in spring 2013 involved developing a methodology, conducting research into the background, collection, analysis and communication of the results of the study. The results were presented at the BSS Symposium. It is not clear if the results and recommendations were communicated to the Butte County Regional Transportation System or the City of Chico for consideration.

#### **8. Planned Program Improvement Actions Resulting from Outcomes (if applicable)**

How will the assessment data and their evaluation be used to improve the program? Possible actions might include revising pedagogy, courses, curricula, or other learning support mechanisms.

This assessment was beneficial in determining both the kinds of geographic and planning skills that are being provided and the different community organizations and associations that have been the recipient of the services. The analysis of the data indicates that the kinds of geographic services that are being provided are appropriate.

It is recommended that the Department Internship Program be further formalized. It is important that Student Service Learning/Internship Plans be completed and submitted to the department at the beginning of the semester. The plans contain important information about emergency contacts, the internship site and supervisor as well as the expected learning objectives, service objectives and evaluation methods. A record of all internships, regardless of if they are for credit or not, or paid or not, should be filed in the department office.

The Ecological Reserves Internship Program provides an excellent model for setting out the goals, expected outcomes and method of evaluation for providing service to a community organization.

GEOG 498 Community Service Practice in Geography provides an excellent opportunity for conducting a service learning project in the classroom setting. The project developed in spring 2013 semester clearly involved appropriate geographic services, but it is not clear if the results and recommendations were communicated to the appropriate community organization. It is recommended that the results of such a project be communicated to the appropriate community partner.

#### **9. Planned Revision of Measures or Metrics (if applicable)**

A possible revision of a measure might be to recommend a change in the assignments that are evaluated for program assessment, or the number of assignments examined, and by whom. A metric revision might be for program faculty to decide to change the "bar" for acceptable performance.

It is recommended that the evaluative materials be collected for analysis of the SLO in the future and department faculty members participate in setting acceptable performance standards.

## 10. Planned Revisions to Program Objectives or Learning Outcomes (if applicable)

After examining the assessment data it might be appropriate to revise one or more of the Program Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes.

It is recommended that the Department Internship Program be further formalized to archive all Student Service Learning/Internship Plans in department office. Appropriate changes should be made to the program to comply with the CSU, Chico campus charge to create an off-campus internship policy that reflects EO 1064 guidelines.

The department course alignment matrix was examined for this assessment. It was noted that the curriculum has gone through substantive changes since the last matrix update. For example, the writing proficiency course (GEOG 490) was amended to be offered at a 300 level (GEOG 390) so that students would take the writing proficiency course before taking 400 level courses in the major that require writing. This is not reflected in the course alignment matrix. [http://www.csuchico.edu/apr/program\\_portfolios/behavioral\\_social-sci/geog/matrix.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/apr/program_portfolios/behavioral_social-sci/geog/matrix.shtml) .

Additionally it was noted that there is not a student learning outcome that addresses diversity even though it is integrated into the curriculum. It is recommended that the department develop a SLO regarding diversity to reflect the current curriculum.

## 11. Changes to Assessment Schedule (if applicable)

Do the results create a need for change in your assessment schedule? If so, please describe.

I recommend that the department support a revision of the course alignment matrix and SLOs in spring 2013.

## 12. Information for Next Year

What learning outcome(s) are you examining next year and who will be the contact person?

1.2 Students can collect, compile, and interpret geographic data.

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## II. Appendices (please include any of the following that are applicable to your program)

A. Assessment Data Summaries (Details that elaborate on item 6, above.)

B. Measurement Standards (Rubrics, etc.)

C. Survey Instruments

**Please submit your completed report electronically to Eddie Vela by 10/1/13.**