

**CHICO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**ASSESSMENT SUMMARY UPDATE**

**PROGRAM: BA in Religious Studies**

Year of review	Student Learning Outcome	Describe assessment activity done this year for this SLO	Findings	Based on the results or evidence, what action was taken regarding program improvements?
2012 – 2013	SLO6b. Students can make clear, well organized, and substantive oral presentations.	5 question rubric applied to oral class presentation in RELS 482; an oral presentation rubric applied to presentation in the Religious Studies Senior Symposium and in the Religious Studies Thesis Defense	86% of students met the benchmark in RELS 482; 50% of the students in public presentations met the benchmark of adequate performance in all 4 areas of analysis (organization, content, delivery, and dialogue)	The program decided to distribute an oral presentation rubric to students prior to their presentation and to give them increased practice and instruction in this area
2013 – 2014	SLO2. Students can explain how religion shapes and has been shaped by other cultural systems in history using major theories in the study of religion.	<p>RELS 180: pre-test and post-test of 47 students in the class was conducted to determine three dimensions of knowledge and pre-understanding, assessed using a scoring rubric with a benchmark of 7 out of 9</p> <p>RELS 313: A 1500-word essay question was given and scored with a rubric that evaluated 6 features of the relevant religions &amp; cultures separately; benchmarks on F1: 3/5; F2: 3/5; F3: 7/10; F4: 7/10; F5: 7/10; F6: 7/10</p>	<p>RELS 180: 100% of all students made the benchmark in the post-test, including the 1 major</p> <p>RELS 313: 100% of majors made all 6 benchmarks; vs. between 60% and 85% of total students who met each of the 6 benchmarks</p>	<p>RELS 180: No action taken</p> <p>RELS 313: Student ability to critically evaluate raw data about Buddhism and Chinese and Indian cultures and apply relevant theories is not as strong as we would like. More time could in future be spent in trying to place these changes within a theoretical framework.</p>
2014 – 2015	SLO5a. Students can make clear, well organized, and	<u>RELS 275I Women and Religion</u> : the SLO was assessed by evaluating the	<u>RELS 275I</u> : 87% of all students (not majors) met the benchmark	1) Students should have more exercises during class that focus on specific writing tasks. One instructor notes that

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	substantive written presentations.	<p>quality of the students' final research essay</p> <p><u>RELS 480 Theories and Criticisms of Religion:</u> Students are required to write a three to four page mid-term paper and a five to six page final paper.</p> <p><u>RELS 482 Seminar in Religious Studies:</u> Students' writing was assessed through a 15-20 page research paper.</p>	<p><u>RELS 480:</u> 100% of majors met the benchmark</p> <p><u>RELS 482:</u> 100% of majors met the benchmark</p>	<p>introductory assignments to a larger project (such as thesis statement and introductory paragraphs) may need to be resubmitted when the topic is changed in order for these assignments to be effective preparation for all student essays.</p> <p>2) One-on-one meetings with students are highly conducive to success, although these meetings cannot remedy all language difficulties, particularly at the introductory level of instruction. However, students often do not take advantage of opportunities to meet with faculty (and one report notes that those who do often expect that the meeting guarantees a good grade, regardless of the quality of the product). These observations imply that instructors (at least those in smaller, mostly majors classes) should consider making such meetings mandatory.</p> <p>3) 2 of the 3 reports note the instructional and pedagogical value in posting exemplary student work from previous semesters. Individual faculty members should be encouraged to assemble and post such materials regularly, and even to use them in class instruction. The department should assist in the collection of these materials in courses (like RELS 482 Seminar in Religious Studies) that often have different instructors.</p>
2015 – 2016	SLO 3. Students can use methods employed by the discipline of religious studies to analyze primary and secondary texts.	We assessed three sequenced assignments in RELS 306, Roots of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, that asked students to distinguish between religious and	Results were inconsistent across the three assignments in the sequence, and did not show measurable improvement across the semester. Nonetheless, 83% of students	The religious studies major underwent a major revision that launched in Fall 2016, with new courses, revised program SLOs, and a new assessment matrix and schedule. The SLO assessed here is now one part of the new program's SLO 2: "Students

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		scholarly treatments of religious texts and to apply appropriate analytical tools to their interpretation. The assignments were assessed with a 4-level rubric.	achieved benchmark performance levels on 7 out of the 12 total trait assessments (4 traits across 3 assignments).	understand major critical approaches to the study of religion and can explain how component elements of religion (myth, ritual, scripture, etc.) function in diverse contexts." We will continue to teach the scholarly interpretation of religious texts in RELS 306 and so the instructor has made two changes to this assignment sequence: providing students with a narrow range of pre-selected options for the first, and more direct instruction on what counts as an appropriate scholarly source in the study of religion.
<p>The B.A. in Religious Studies was significantly revised as of Fall 2016, involving new SLOs, a new course alignment matrix, and new assessment schedule. Starting in AY 2016-2017, faculty began assessing the new SLOs.</p>				
2016 – 2017	SLO 1. Students can define and identify the history, beliefs, and practices of major world religious traditions.	We assessed students' knowledge of the religious traditions in courses focusing on these specific religions: 200, 300, 306, 308. The assessments were done through tests on specific aspects of the histories, beliefs and practices of the traditions. We also assessed how well students could identify and define these histories, beliefs, and practices in the context of American religious history (in RELS 322).	In RELS 200, the average score on the first test was 14/25 with the lowest being 8 and the highest being 19. The average score on the second test, after the course had been completed was 20.5, with 16 being the lowest and 23 being the highest. In RELS 300, scores ranged from 80% to 100% on the exit test, with a mean score of 91%, with the result that all students met the benchmark, and all but one exceeded it. In RELS 306, on the post-test, 80% of majors met the flat benchmark (this compares favorably to the pre-test, where only 20% of RELS majors met the flat benchmark). With regard to the overall benchmark, 100% of RELS majors improved their scores on the post-test, with an average	The religious studies major underwent a major revision that launched in Fall 2016, with new courses, revised program SLOs, and a new assessment matrix and schedule. Since this is the first time we have done assessment in the new courses, we look forward to seeing what changes over time. As the new B.A. program builds enrollment, as we hope it will, we should be able to get a better sense of how well we are meeting our SLOs.

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			improvement of 25.4%. In RELS 322, the number of majors meeting the benchmark was 3 (out of 4).	