



Bowling Green State University

American Culture Studies Program
Bowling Green, Oh 43403-0237
Office 419-372-0586
Program 419-372-8886
Fax 419-372-7537

June 19, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Simon Morgan-Russell, Associate Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Daniel Madigan
Vice Provost for Academic Programs

Milt Hakel, Chair
Student Achievement Assessment Committee

FROM: Donald McQuarie, Director
American Culture Studies Program

TOPIC: ACS Summary of Undergraduate Assessment Accomplishments, 2006-2007

Below is the report from the American Culture Studies Program of our student learning assessment outcomes for the academic year 2006-2007. This report includes the 2007 Assessment Report of the ACS Student Assessment Committee. Although it is difficult to draw general conclusions, due to the relatively small number of ACS graduating undergraduate majors from which we have drawn our information over the past few years, we feel that our undergraduate major students' performance have continued to show considerable improvement in recent years in terms of their demonstrated accomplishments in their senior capstone theses. The ACS undergraduate program currently has fifteen undergraduate majors.

Three students' senior capstone theses are included in this year's analysis, two of whom completed their BA degree in American Culture Studies and graduated in May 2007. One of these students will be entering the MA program in English literature at BGSU in fall 2007. The third student will be completing his degree and graduating in August 2007.

ACS Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

1. Develop skills for interdisciplinary thinking. Students should develop holistic critical thinking skills that enable them to make connections among a variety of disciplines and understand the relationship among various expressive traditions in American culture.
2. Develop communication skills. Students should develop and enhance communication skills, both oral and written, appropriate to their level of development. At the graduate level the expectation is for professional level scholarly writing; at the undergraduate level students should be able to write organized and coherent essays with appropriate scholarly format and style.
3. Understand the cultural context of human expression and behavior. Students should understand the importance of culture as a determining factor in such areas as personal and social identity and values, and community and national traditions.

4. Understand the multicultural and pluralistic nature of American culture. Students should develop an appreciation for the diversity of our national cultural heritage and an understanding of the complexity of contemporary multicultural issues.

5. Understand the relationship between theories of culture and analysis of cultural tradition. Students should be able to understand and apply theories of culture studies appropriate to their education level. At the graduate level this involves independent critical analysis of culture from a theoretical perspective; at the undergraduate level, an understanding of how our understanding of culture is shaped by theoretical perspectives.

Assessment Measurement Activities

- Senior ACS majors are required to enroll in a two-semester senior capstone experience. This consists of two courses: ACS 405, Qualitative Research Methods, which students take in the Fall semester of their senior year; and ACS ACS 499, Senior Capstone Tutorial Project, which students take in the Spring semester of their senior year. The first course in the sequence, the Qualitative Methods course, is cross-listed with ETHN 405, and is taught collaboratively with that department. The purpose of this course is to expose students to a variety of humanities and social sciences qualitative research methods appropriate to the field of cultural studies. By the completion of the course, students have identified the topic of their senior capstone research project and have initiated their research. The two-course sequence culminates in a senior research thesis that requires the student to draw upon the theoretical literatures of ACS and related fields in the process of reporting their field research experience. This research thesis is conducted under the guidance of an ACS joint-appointment or affiliated faculty member, and requires the approval of the ACS Undergraduate Advisor.
- Following the completion of the seminar the ACS Program Assessment Committee examines these senior theses and writes an “internal” program report assessing the theses in terms of the program’s five learning outcomes. The internal program report for the 2006-07 academic year is included in this report.
- All graduating seniors asked to return a written exit interview/program evaluation by the ACS Program Director in which they are asked to reflect on and evaluate their undergraduate education in the ACS major. Students may substitute a personal interview with the ACS program director for the written evaluation at their request. Students are asked to respond to the following questions:
 1. What did you find valuable or positive about the ACS program (curriculum, instructors, advising, etc.)?
 2. What did you find to not be valuable, or to be negative about the program?
 3. We are interested in learning your impressions and assessment of your senior capstone project experience. Did you find this independent project to be a valuable component of your ACS major?
 4. Finally, what suggestions would you have for us in terms of changes that we might consider making in the program--concerning courses, program organization, advising, requirements, etc.?

Analysis of Assessments: Evaluation of Senior Capstone Theses

The internal assessment of our student's senior capstone theses in terms of the ACS Program's five learning outcomes is attached at the end of this report. To summarize the ACS Assessment Committee's evaluation, it is quite positive for two of the papers, but less so regarding the third student's capstone paper. Two of the capstone papers exhibited strength in the areas of interdisciplinary thinking, communication skills, and understanding the context of human behavior. One of these papers did not address the issue understanding the multicultural nature of American society, although this was not the focus of the paper's research. Both of these papers were seen as deficient in their use of theory, however. The third student's paper was graded as deficient in almost all counts. This student has compiled a much weaker academic record as a BGSU undergraduate, but even so, we would expect a better performance on his senior thesis. However, I note that this student seemed to be the most successful of the three in dealing with theories of culture and integrating them into the student's research, learning outcome # 5.

This year's graduating cohort of students is the third now to graduate having completed the new senior capstone sequence—qualitative research methods course and senior capstone thesis. It seems to us that the recent reorganization of the ACS major has improved the abilities of our graduating seniors to successfully demonstrate mastery of the student learning outcomes for the ACS major. However, our experience with three year's assessment of senior capstone projects has led us to undertake a reorganization of the capstone process for next year that we will outline below. We anticipate that this reorganization of the capstone will allow us to address some of the weaknesses in student capstone papers that we have documented over the last three years.

Analysis of Assessments: Evaluation of Senior Exit Interviews

Exit evaluations were returned to me by all three of our three graduating seniors. The evaluations are quite informative, and in my opinion continue to show a marked improvement in our students' self-reported experience of the ACS program over the exit interviews conducted by this office in the years May 2001-2004, prior to our reorganization of the undergraduate program.

Areas of program strength: The students' exit interviews identified the following areas of program strength.

- the flexibility and range of ACS classes.
- the quality of instructors in the program; one student wrote, "The professors in ACS are outstanding." Another wrote, "All of my instructors showed that they actually did care about students."
- the variety of topics and courses presented by the program; one student wrote, "I feel as though I have gotten a wide range of education in various topics relating to American Culture."
- the quality of advising was mentioned by two students as a strength of the program.
- the emphasis on cultural diversity in ACS classes.
- the capstone experience; all three students seem to have genuinely enjoyed their senior capstone experience and felt that it was a valuable part of their education in ACS. One wrote:

"I feel that my project provided me with the opportunity to actively use the research, analytical, and writing skills I have learned throughout college. Had I just been required to take finals and nothing else, I don't think I would have felt as good about my overall education. This project allowed me to apply what I had learned in a way that an exam could not have."

Areas of program weakness:

- two students mentioned the small number of upper-division (300/400-level) ACS classes offered. One student wrote, “I wish there had been more classes offered each semester.”
- difficulty in getting to know ACS faculty. One student wrote about the difficulty she faced in picking a mentor for her senior project since she had not gotten to know many of the ACS faculty members.
- difficulty in getting to know other ACS majors. One student wrote:

“Another suggestion would be to somehow create more cohesiveness between ACS majors and faculty members. I only knew a handful of ACS majors throughout my four years.”

- lack of clarity concerning expectations for the ACS senior capstone project. One student wrote:

“The problem I encountered with the [senior capstone] project was that there seemed to be a lot of miscommunication and undefined guidelines. From others I have talked to they have a similar impression. For something so important to our experiences there should be, it seems, a more formalized guide to what is expected.”

Although in general our graduating seniors seem pleased with their overall experience in the ACS program, there are three areas of concern that are raised by these students: concerns about clarity of expectations and guidance in the senior capstone project; concerns regarding the limited number of upper-division ACS courses; concerns about limited opportunities to meet other ACS majors and ACS faculty outside of the classroom. We will address these three issues in the section of our assessment report below on Actions.

Actions Based on Assessment Findings

The ACS faculty undertook during the 2002-03 and 2003-04 academic years a full-scale review of the ACS undergraduate curriculum, which eventuated in a complete overhaul of the ACS major. This reorganization of the curriculum was based, in large part, on the results of our first two years of ACS program assessment and assessment reports. These changes were blue-sheeted and approved by the appropriate university committees in the Fall semester 2003 and fully implemented in the 2004-05 academic year for all new ACS majors; consequently, several current ACS majors chose to complete their ACS major during the 2004-05 and 2005-06 academic years under the new major requirements. The 2005-06 graduating class, however, is the first graduating class for which all graduates have satisfied the requirements of the reorganized ACS major. From this point on, all ACS seniors will graduate under the requirements of the reorganized major.

We are now three years into our new curriculum following the reorganization of the ACS major. This reorganization of the curriculum was based, in large part, on the results of our first two years of ACS program assessment and assessment reports. These changes were blue-sheeted and approved by the appropriate university committees in the Fall semester 2003 and fully implemented in the 2004-05 academic year for all new ACS majors; beginning in 2005-06 all graduating majors in ACS have been required to satisfy all of the requirements for the reorganized ACS major.

Senior Capstone Project

In our view, the key component in the reorganization of the ACS major is the senior capstone sequence, in which students take a two-course sequence, ACS 405-Qualitative Methods in the Fall semester and ACS 499-Senior Capstone Tutorial in the Spring semester. This process culminates in the student writing a senior capstone thesis, which is completed as an independent study project under the direction of an ACS faculty member. While we are very pleased with the capstone project as a culminating experience for ACS majors, we have decided, after assessment of three years of these capstone projects, that we need to exercise greater control in the ACS program over the development and execution of students' capstone projects.

The comments of the student in this year's senior exit interview concerning the undefined guidelines and lack of clarity about expectations in the ACS senior capstone project seem particularly telling. We are in the process of developing a written set of guidelines for ACS seniors and for faculty supervisors regarding the capstone project. These guidelines should, at a minimum, provide the following:

- Clear guidelines for selecting capstone projects; this process of selection should involve the participation of the ACS undergraduate advisor.
- A procedure for selecting the faculty supervisor that, again, will involve the participation and approval of the ACS undergraduate advisor.
- A clear timeline for the development and completion of capstone projects; all too often in the past students have procrastinated and postponed writing their capstone papers until the end of the spring semester; to avoid this in the future, we will give the ACS undergraduate advisor a greater role in supervising the actual execution of the senior capstone project by ACS students.
- A closer working relationship between the ACS undergraduate advisor and the instructors of ACS 405 (which is a cross-listed course with ETHN 485; the instructors for the course are normally supplied by the Ethnic Studies Department), in order to assure a smoother transition for our majors in their senior capstone experience from ACS 405 to ACS 499.
- A clear set of procedures, which will include the following: summer letter of expectations for capstone senior project; fall capstone workshop in ACS; proposal deadline; advisor contract; standardization of paper lengths; bibliography standardization; and due dates for chapters and revisions.

Availability of Upper-Division Courses

Regarding our students' comments about the lack of availability of upper-level classes, over the last three years we have attempted to offer at least one upper-division ACS undergraduate course each semester (Fall, Spring, Summer). We have made two faculty hires in the last couple of years that should help to improve the number and diversity of ACS upper-level courses.

Our recent addition in Fall 2005 of Dr. Madeline Duntley as a joint-appointment ACS faculty member has created an opportunity for new upper-level ACS course offerings in her academic field of religious studies. She has taught successful upper-division courses, Witchcraft in America and New Religions, New Age. Dr. Lucy Long became a joint-appointment ACS Instructor beginning in Fall 2006, and taught a successful upper-division courses in her specialty area of food studies in the Spring 2007 semester. We anticipate that she will offer "foodways" classes on a regular basis, which we believe will be very popular with BGSU students. We recognize that we need to be careful, though, to maintain high enrollment levels if we are to continue to offer more upper division classes, and to not neglect our primary undergraduate responsibility in the field of general education in ACS 200 and 250.

Community-Building in ACS Undergraduate Program

The concerns expressed by one of our students in this year's exit interview regarding a sense of isolation and lack of familiarity with other ACS majors and ACS faculty are issues that the ACS faculty have discussed at different times in the past. Already, in each of the last two years, ACS majors have been invited to play a role in the ACS graduate student conferences held in April; several of our majors have presented papers or otherwise participated in the ACS Graduate Student Conferences.

For the next year, we plan to model several events on our Friday "pizza lunch" events for ACS graduate students, which combine lunch and a short lecture or other academic event. We would like to experiment with two or three of these events during the 2007-08 academic year to gauge the interest of our majors in attending such community-building events. We are also considering scheduling an event to include both our majors and graduate students at some time during the spring semester, possibly asking one or two of our graduating seniors to present their research for their senior projects at a Friday pizza lunch that would include faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate majors in the audience.

Future Developments

We will work over the next year to extend our student assessment to give us a better idea of the development of our graduating major's assessment skills over their entire academic careers. One idea that came out of a conversation with Associate Dean Simon Morgan-Russell is to require our majors to keep a student portfolio, in which they will maintain copies of papers from all of their ACS courses taken throughout their college careers, which can be made a part of our assessment efforts. We might also ask our students to write their own evaluations of the development of their basic academic skills throughout their four years of college study. We will be working during the rest of the summer and fall to develop our plans for more comprehensive assessment, and hope to begin implementing these in time for next year's assessment report.

Conclusion

We believe that the reforms that we have implemented over the last several years in the ACS undergraduate program have already led to improvements in our assessment outcomes for our graduating seniors; we anticipate further improvement in the future as these reforms in our curriculum and instruction become further institutionalized. I would also expect that the reorganization of the ACS undergraduate major will possibly lead to some revision of the learning outcomes themselves over the next few years, as we gain more knowledge concerning our students' learning strengths and weaknesses. We are pleased with the results of our work to improve the ACS undergraduate curriculum and undergraduate instruction; we anticipate making further improvements over the next few years.

14 June 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Donald McQuarie, Director
American Culture Studies Program

FROM: Donald McQuarie, ACS Program
Madeline Duntley, ACS Program

TOPIC: Assessment of 2006-07 ACS Senior Capstone Theses:

“Which Side Are You On?’ The Social History of Marvel Comics as Socio-Political Allegory from Captain America to *Civil War*” by Christopher Goudos, Advisor Brett Holden

“*The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*: A Fresh Take on the News in the 21st Century” by Alexandra Lightle, Advisor Robert Sloane

“Analyzing the Male Phenomenon: A Look at Masculinity While Watching Sports” by James Marshall, Advisor Donald McQuarie

This memo is part of an internal evaluation of a senior capstone projects by American Culture Studies majors; the evaluation focuses on the extent to which the projects demonstrate the students’ attainment of the following Goals for Student Learning, established by the American Culture Studies Program:

1. Develop skills for interdisciplinary thinking. Students should develop holistic critical thinking skills that enable them to make connections among a variety of disciplines and understand the relationship among various expressive traditions in American culture.
2. Develop communication skills. Students should develop and enhance communication skills, both oral and written, appropriate to their level of development. At the graduate level the expectation is for professional level scholarly writing; at the undergraduate level students should be able to write organized and coherent essays with appropriate scholarly format and style.
3. Understand the cultural context of human expression and behavior. Students should understand the importance of culture as a determining factor in such areas as personal and social identity and values, and community and national traditions.
4. Understand the multicultural and pluralistic nature of American culture. Students should develop an appreciation for the diversity of our national cultural heritage and an understanding of the complexity of contemporary multicultural issues.
5. Understand the relationship between theories of culture and analysis of cultural tradition. Students should be able to understand and apply theories of culture studies appropriate to their education level. At the graduate level this involves independent critical analysis of culture from a theoretical perspective; at the undergraduate level, an understanding of how our understanding of culture is shaped by theoretical perspectives.

Assessment of Senior Capstone Project
Christopher Goudos

Learning objective 1:

This paper demonstrates a reasonable level of interdisciplinary understanding. It is very focused on the analysis of popular culture texts (comics), but does draw on some cultural theory from different disciplinary contexts. There is no real attempt to integrate material from different disciplinary contexts in this paper, however.

Learning objective 2:

This paper is well written. The paper is coherent, argues a particular interpretation of texts, and does so in an effective manner. The argument is written at a concrete level of analysis, however, with little effort at integrating theoretical literature. The paper, however, is quite successful in linking the analysis of particular comics and comic characters with political currents in contemporary American culture. In general, this is a very effective, well-written undergraduate paper.

Learning objective 3:

This paper demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the cultural contexts of human expression and behavior. The paper offers readings of contemporary social/political issues of race and gender and raises them in a clearly cultural context.

Learning objective 4:

This paper demonstrates an good understanding of the complexity of contemporary multicultural life. Issues of race and multiculturalism are at the heart of the paper's re-reading of comic book themes and characters. While the paper's reading of these issues is somewhat constricted by what might be seen as an overly-narrow focus on texts, overall the paper successfully meets this learning objective.

Learning objective 5:

As discussed above, the greatest weakness of this paper in terms of our learning outcomes is its failure to utilize theories of culture. The paper is written at a concrete level of analysis and the conclusions reached at the end of the paper seem to be developed intuitively rather than on the basis of rigorous application of theoretical models.

Assessment of Senior Capstone Project
Alexandra Lightle

Learning objective 1:

This is the most successful of the three papers under review. It exhibits a high degree of interdisciplinarity, combining media discourse analysis, popular culture, and social/political analysis. These different elements are very successfully integrated in the paper.

Learning objective 2:

This paper is very well written; in fact, this would be considered good work at the graduate level, in our opinion. The paper develops a clear line of argument, is well organized, makes excellent use of evidence, and draws clear conclusions. It is also cleverly written and holds the reader's attention. The longest of the three papers under review (at 45 pages), it is also the most engaging and easiest to read.

Learning objective 3:

The paper places its topic in a satisfactorily complex cultural context. The paper is especially good in establishing the media context of the two television programs under review.

Learning objective 4:

Issues of multiculturalism are only dealt with tangentially in passing; however, these issues are not the focus of the paper.

Learning objective 5:

This paper, like the first paper discussed above, is quite concrete in focus. There is little utilization of cultural theory. However, there is appropriate utilization of some media theory about "news" programming and the impact of "fake news" programming. The paper has an extensive bibliography and was well researched.

Assessment of Senior Capstone Project
James Marshall

Learning objective 1:

There is not a great deal of interdisciplinary thinking distinguishing this paper. However, it does combine work from feminist studies and sport studies in a rather rudimentary way. There is some effort made at creating an interdisciplinary framework for the study, but it is not done in a very sophisticated way.

Learning objective 2:

This paper is the weakest of the three papers in this year's group. Of the three papers, we would say that it is far and away the least well written. One of our committee members worked with James on this paper, and knows that the paper was put through several iterations that somewhat improved the structure and clarity of the paper. The paper has a clear outline and does a fairly good job of integrating theoretical work and empirical research, but the research is rudimentary and, again, the paper is not as sophisticated a piece of work as we would like to see produced by our graduating seniors—the paper reads more like a sophomore-level piece of writing.

Learning objective 3:

This paper scores a little better on this dimension, if only because the cultural context of human expression and behavior is the focus of the study. This student actually shows a good grasp of the cultural roots of social behavior and this paper does a good job of demonstrating the gendered structure of public behavior.

Learning objective 4:

Issues of multiculturalism do not really arise in this paper. Had these issues been addressed in this paper, the study would have been strengthened.

Learning objective 5:

This paper is predicated on an attempt to conduct a piece of qualitative social research informed by several sociological theories to test the explanatory efficacy of these theories. Again, the study was not conducted in the most sophisticated way, but it does show an appreciation of the relationship between theory and social research that this learning outcome aspires to.

ACS Graduate Student Assessment Report June 20, 2007

The purpose of the ACS graduate student assessment plan is to aid our students in successfully completing their program of study and gaining the skills they need to successfully compete on the academic job market. The plan will help us to ensure this outcome by providing, (1) several objective measures we can use to determine the success or failure of our students in the particular activities we have identified as essential to their success, (2) opportunities for us to review our students' performance in their graduate coursework and to convey to our students the faculty's assessment of their strengths and weaknesses along with suggestions for how to improve their performance, and (3) opportunities for our students to give us their assessment of the program, which will help us in continuing to review and fine-tune the structure of the ACS graduate program.

Each learning outcome is stated below, followed by the measure achieved for this learning outcome during the 2006-07 academic year. We will conclude with a short conclusion evaluating this year's graduate student assessment.

Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate mastery of their academic field.

Measure: Preliminary examination for 3rd year doctoral students: 90% will pass examination.

Outcome: The ACS PhD preliminary examination was given in October 2006 to all thirteen students in the third-year doctoral student cohort. Twelve students passed the examination, although three students were required by the examination committee to rewrite a portion of their examination, delaying their completion of the exam until December 2006. One student failed the exam, and subsequently withdrew from the ACS PhD program with a terminal MA degree awarded by the Graduate College in Summer 2007.

Measure: Comprehensive examination for 1st year MA students: 90% will pass examination.

Outcome: Six MA students took the MA Comprehensive examination during the 2006-07 academic year, choosing to complete the Plan II non-thesis route to the MA degree. All six students successfully passed the MA Comprehensive exam.

Discussion: Our students met our achievement outcomes for both the doctoral preliminary and MA comprehensive exams, in both cases exceeding the benchmark criteria established by the program faculty. We conclude that the curriculum of the ACS MA and PhD programs are adequately preparing students to pass their comprehensive/ preliminary examinations, thus displaying mastery of their academic field.

Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate the ability and motivation to participate successfully in professional activities in their academic field.

Measure: MA students—in each academic year, 50% of full-time second year students will present a paper at an academic conference.

Outcome: In the academic year 2006-07, 3 second-year MA students presented papers at an academic conference, out of a total of 7 full-time second-year students—43% (down from 50% in 2005-06)

Measure: PhD students—in each academic year, 50% of full-time doctoral students (years 1-4) will present a paper at an academic conference.

Outcome: In the academic year 2006-07, 30 PhD students presented papers at an academic conference, out of a total of 38 full-time doctoral students—79% (up from 67% in 2005-06)

Measure: PhD students—by the end of their 4th year of full-time study, 100% will have presented one paper at an academic conference; 75% will have presented two papers; 50% will have presented three or more papers.

Outcome: Below is a list presenting the total number of academic conference presentations compiled by our seven 2006-07 fourth-year doctoral students during the four years of study in the ACS PhD program. The number of conference presentations is listed for each individual student for this year's cohort in the left hand column; the same information is presented for last year's fourth-year cohort in the right hand column for comparison:

	(2006-07 cohort)	(2005-06 cohort)
Student 1:	0	0
Student 2:	4	2
Student 3:	6	3
Student 4:	6	5
Student 5:	7	5
Student 6:	9	6
Student 7:	11	9

In summary, 86% of this year's cohort of fourth-year ACS doctoral students have presented at least one conference paper during their time in the program; 86% have presented at least two papers; 72% have presented at least three papers. These statistics are identical to those for the 2005-06 4th-year cohort. However, the median number of papers presented rose for this year's cohort from 5 to 6 papers, And the mean number of papers presented at academic conferences jumped from 4.3 papers presented by the 2005-06 cohort to 6.1 papers presented by the 2006-07 cohort.

Measure: PhD students—by the end of their 4th year of full-time study, 50% will have published an article in a professional academic venue (had an article accepted for publication in an academic journal—either paper or on-line—or a book chapter/essay in an edited volume (excluding book reviews).

Outcome: Below is a list presenting the total number of academic publications compiled by our seven 2006-07 fourth-year doctoral students during the four years of study in the ACS PhD program (left hand column), with again the same information presented for last year's 2005-06

fourth-year cohort. The number of academic publications (either in print or in press) is listed for each individual student:

	(2006-07 cohort)	(2005-06 cohort)
Student 1:	1*	0
Student 2:	1'	0
Student 3:	1	2
Student 4:	2	2
Student 5:	2	2
Student 6:	2	2
Student 7:	5	3

* This student released a film during the period of his doctoral studies which is counted here as a publication; the film received a preliminary nomination for a 2006 Academic Award for Best Documentary.

' This student published an edited volume of original essays this year which are here counted as a publication.

In summary, all seven of the 2006-07 cohort of fourth-year ACS doctoral students have published at least one academic journal article or book chapter during their time in the program. Of these students, 60% have published at least two articles/book chapters. These accomplishments are comparable to the publication record of last year's fourth-year doctoral cohort.

Discussion: Our second-year MA students came up slightly short of our expectations for professional conference activity, with 43% presenting a conference paper during the academic year. Our doctoral students, however, far exceeded our expectations for professional conference activity, with over three-fourths of doctoral students presenting conference papers this year.

Our fourth-year doctoral students, completing their eligibility for graduate assistance, also demonstrated a level of professional activity in terms of both conference activity and academic publication that exceeded our expectations, with multiple academic conference presentations and more than one academic publication during doctoral study proving to be the norm for this group of students. In general, we conclude that both ACS MA and PhD students have demonstrated the ability and motivation to participate successfully in professional activities appropriate to their level of academic study.

Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate the ability to participate successfully on the professional/academic job market.

Measure: PhD students—within one year of completion of degree, 50% of graduates will have successfully taken appropriate full-time professional employment; within two years of completion of degree, 75% of graduates; within three years of completion of degree, 100% of graduates.

Outcome: Each of the last four years in which doctoral students completed their PhD degrees is listed below, along with the statistics for current employment.

2006: 6 of 8 students completing the PhD degree in this year are in full-time professional employment (75%); 3 of these jobs are tenure-track academic positions. Three of the other positions

2005: 4 of 6 students completing the PhD degree in this year are in full-time professional employment (66%); 3 of these jobs are tenure-track academic positions.

2004: 8 of 9 students completing the PhD degree in this year are in full-time professional employment (88%); 4 of these jobs are tenure-track academic positions; another one is an academic librarian position.

2003: 4 of 4 students completing the PhD degree in this year are in full-time professional employment (100%); 1 of these jobs is a tenured academic position.

Measure: PhD students—within three years of completion of degree, 25% of graduates will have received a book contract to publish their dissertation.

Outcome: Three students from our last three graduating classes (2003, 2004, 2005) have received a book contract to publish their dissertation. The three presses are: University of Wisconsin Press, University of Philippines Press, and Duke University Press. A fourth former student's dissertation is under advanced review by the University of Illinois Press. This is out of a total of 19 graduates from this period—21%.

Discussion: In general, we are pleased with the success our doctoral graduates have had in securing appropriate professional employment. The data presented above exceed our minimal expectations for our students in the academic job market. The one area of concern that we have is that only about one-half of our graduates for the four years under review have secured a tenure-track position at an academic institution. This is the goal of our graduate placement, and we would like to improve this statistic over the next few years. Although this year's report does not include very recent (2007) graduates, we would note that as of this date, four of our 2007 graduates have already taken tenure-track jobs for next year, with another four in full-time non-tenure track positions for next year, indicating an improving record in job placement for recent graduates of the ACS PhD program.

Closely tied to success in the academic job market is success in the publication field. We would note that all three of our students who have successfully published their dissertations in academic presses are currently in tenure-track academic positions. We intend to continue to encourage our doctoral students to attempt to publish their dissertations as an integral part of a successful academic career pattern.

Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate timely completion of their degree.

Measure: MA students—by the end of their 2nd year of full-time study, 90% of continuing students will have completed their degree.

Outcome: Out of the 12 full-time students in the 2004 ACS MA entering class, 10 students have now completed the MA degree—an 84% graduation rate.

Measure: PhD students—by the end of their 4th year of full-time study, 30% of continuing students (students who have completed all course work and attained ABD status) will have completed their degree; by the end of their 5th year of study, 60% will have completed their degree; by the end of their 6th year of study, 90% will have completed their degree.

Outcome: For the year of each entering ACS doctoral class, the number of full-time students in each entering class is given, followed by the number of students in that class who completed all

course work and passed their preliminary examination, attaining ABD status, finally followed by the number of students who have completed all requirements for graduation by the time of this report. Finally the percentage for each entering class of ABD students who have graduated are indicated.

2003 entering class (10):	8 ABD, 6 PhD	(75%)
2002 entering class (10):	7 ABD, 5 PhD	(71%)
2001 entering class (12):	10 ABD, 6 PhD	(60%)
2000 entering class (11):	10 ABD, 8 PhD	(80%)
1999 entering class (7):	3 ABD, 3 PhD	(100%)
1998 entering class (6):	5 ABD, 5 PhD	(100%)

Discussion: As part of the ACS program review internal report, which is being written during summer 2006, we have reviewed graduation rates for our MA and PhD programs for the last ten years. The high graduation rate of the 2004 MA entering class is no anomaly. The ACS MA program has historically enjoyed high graduation rates of 80% or higher. Our goal to elevate these rates to 90%+ for each graduating class is a realistic one.

The situation for the ACS doctoral program is more complicated because often doctoral students delay completion of their dissertation and graduation for seven or more years into their doctoral program. We are very serious about reducing the time to degree and improving the graduation rate for ACS doctoral students, and have taken several steps to improve the progress toward degree of our doctoral students, including a common preliminary examination and a mandatory dissertation writing workshop for third year students.

These statistics indicate that we have made improvements in the graduation rates of recent entering classes, which have historically hovered around the 60% mark. In particular, we would draw attention to the high graduation rates for our recent fourth and fifth year cohorts (75% and 71%). We are especially proud of the 75% graduation rate for our fourth-year cohort, which means that 60% of this entering class (and 75% of those students who achieved ABD status) have completed all requirements for the PhD degree and graduated in four years or less. This cohort of students was the first set to pass through the fully revised ACS doctoral program, including the recently added dissertation workshop. We are interpreting these results as evidence that our reorganization of the ACS PhD program following our 2000 program review has at least in this respect, progress toward degree, been highly effective.

Annual and Continuing Assessment Activities:

Assessment Activity: MA students—All MA students are asked to provide a written evaluation of their experience in the ACS MA program at the time of graduation (evaluations will be collected and considered by the ACS MA Executive Committee). Dimensions of assessment include: appropriateness and quality of: coursework, academic advising, professional development, thesis mentoring (where appropriate), preparation for job market/further graduate study.

Outcome: In late June 2007, an ACS Graduate Program Evaluation document (see attachment) was sent to the ten 2006-07 academic year graduates of the ACS MA program. We have only received a few of these evaluations back to date. We will submit an addendum to this report in August reporting on the responses to this evaluation of the program by our recent PhD graduates.

Assessment Activity: PhD students—In January of each year, the ACS PhD Executive Committee will conduct a review of each 1st-year doctoral student's progress during their first

semester of full-time study. This review will be held in consultation with other ACS faculty members, especially those faculty members who have taught these students in their required first-semester classes. The purpose of this review will be to assess the perceived strengths and weaknesses of each student at this early stage in their doctoral study. The director of the ACS program will meet individually with the students to convey the substance of the committee's review to them and to suggest any remedial action that may be deemed appropriate at that time (activity initiated in January 2004).

Outcome: For the third year the ACS PhD Executive Committee conducted this mid-year evaluation of first-year doctoral students. In general, the committee felt that the new ACS doctoral students were performing at an acceptable level. One student had compiled two incomplete grades during the fall 2006 semester and was identified as having difficulties in adjusting to doctoral studies. The ACS program director met with this student several times throughout the spring semester to discuss her work in the program. However, this student continued to struggle during the spring 2007 semester, at least in part because of a broken wrist suffered during the winter. We believe that she has now, however, managed to turn things around, having recently completed all outstanding incomplete grades. But we are carefully monitoring this student's progress and are concerned to help her succeed in the doctoral program.

A second student was identified as having some difficulties with ambivalence about graduate studies. The ACS director met with this student to discuss her interests and motivation for doctoral work, and continued to meet with her periodically throughout the spring semester. This student's work showed sharp improvement during the spring, and she seems to be doing well in the ACS program at this time.

Finally, a third student was identified as having weak writing skills. The director met with this student to suggest strategies to improve his writing. The program director intends to work carefully with this student in the ACS writing course, ACS 745, in the fall 2007 semester and will monitor his writing for improvement.

Assessment Activity: PhD students—A mid-second year assessment of each student's professional development will be written by the professor of the ACS 745-Publication and Professional Development seminar, a required class for all second-year doctoral students. This report will assess each student's professional development to that point. Copies of the report will be provided to the student, the ACS director, the ACS PhD Executive Committee, with a copy in each student's file.

Outcome: This assessment will be initiated in Fall 2007.

Assessment Activity: PhD students—All PhD students are asked to provide a written evaluation of their experience in the ACS PhD program at the time of graduation (evaluations will be collected and considered by the ACS PhD Executive Committee). Dimensions of assessment include, appropriateness and quality of: coursework, academic advising, professional development, dissertation mentoring, and preparation for professional/academic job market.

Outcome: In late June 2007, an ACS Graduate Program Evaluation document (see attachment) was sent to the eleven 2006-07 academic year graduates of the ACS PhD program. We have

only received a few of these evaluations back to date. We will submit an addendum to this report in August reporting on the responses to this evaluation of the program by our recent PhD graduates.