

**San Francisco State University**  
**Inventory of Program Assessment Activities, 2009-2011**

**Program/Degree:** Master of Arts in Geography      **College:** BSS      **Date:** June 10, 2011

**Program Mission:** Each graduate of the MA Program in Geography will develop a depth of understanding in the concepts and theories, and the skills within the discipline of Geography and will have been afforded the opportunity to prepare for a career or further academic work following graduation.

Measurable Student learning outcomes (SLOs) <i>(Include all SLOs)</i>	Place in curriculum where each outcome is addressed <i>(Indicate level of instruction)</i>	Academic year outcome was/will be assessed <i>(provide for each outcome)</i>	Assessment/procedures Methods/strategies <i>(Provide for each SLO)</i>	Summary of findings <i>(What students do well and Where improvements are needed)</i>	Use of findings for program improvement
<b>Demonstrate writing skills appropriate to Masters level work in Geography</b>	Admissions review.  Upon completion of a graduate seminar.	Annually  2006-07 2005-06	Analytical Writing score on the GRE must be 4.5 or better or remediation is required.  Faculty rate a randomly-selected set of papers using a department-approved matrix.	Most applicants whose gpas meet department standards do achieve an AW score of 4.5/better.  By the end of their first or second grad seminar, 70 - 75% of samples papers were grammatical, succinct and well-punctuated. 15-20% of papers included poorly-written discussions of methods and theoretical frameworks.	<b>Threshold score on AW raised to 4.5; those below are now redirected to writing courses.</b>  <b>Earlier interventions sought with weak writers. Students whose writing falls below department standards directed to take a second writing class or work with a writing tutor.</b>

<b>Demonstrate understanding and use of appropriate methods of inquiry in geographic research</b>	GEOG 801	2004-05	Faculty attended thesis defenses for which they were not committee members to review student preparation	Students' ability to explain and justify chosen research methods was inconsistent;	Implement methods of inquiry requirement in the curriculum for all Masters candidates.
	Thesis proposal presentations Geog 895/898	2006-07	Faculty attended thesis proposal presentations by students who had recently submitted PCEs.	Students understanding of methods seems to be improving	Require Thesis Proposal Presentations by all students after Fall, 2006 .
		2007-09	Developed a scoring rubric for thesis proposal presentations. Used in AY 2007-08.		Proposal presentations, especially as integrated into 897, have increased faculty (and fellow student) involvement in thesis advising, increased student interest in identifying appropriate methods and theoretical frameworks.
		2009-11	Revised the scoring rubric. Integrated thesis proposal presentations, defenses, workshops and colloquia into Geog 897. Considerable work involving all faculty went into the 897 revision.  Focus meeting on Geog 897 at the end of the Spring 2011 semester used to identify changes that may be needed.	Rubric improved, and apparently clearer for students. Integration with 897 greatly improved thesis proposal presentations.  First offering of Geog 897 was largely a success, though we found that some students signed up before they were ready, and some assignments were less useful than others. Research project (895) students should not be required to give oral proposal presentations.	Graduation rate has increased, suggesting this step helps students frame their thesis in a manageable way and secure the support they need.

<b>Demonstrate mastery in qualitative or quantitative analysis of geographic research question</b>	<b>Techniques and Methods courses: Geog 103 (Lvl I)</b>  <b>Geog 602, 620,621,652 657, 705, 815, (Lvl II)</b>  <b>Geog 895/898 (Mastery)</b>	<b>03-ongoing</b>	<b>Experience at Geog 103/or equivalent level required for classification</b>	<b>Inconsistency in content of technical or analytical courses.</b>	<b>Techniques subcommittee reviewed &amp; revised techniques curriculum and continues to monitor content.</b>
		<b>2007-09</b>	<b>Evaluation of coursework at Level II</b>  <b>Evaluation and acceptance of thesis at Mastery level</b>  <b>Informal student surveys, exit interviews, alumni follow-up.</b>	<b>Some students graduate with few if any Level II courses.</b>  <b>Lack of mastery evident at some thesis defenses; overall quality has improved significantly since 602/705 requirement added.</b>	<b>Required all Masters students to take a course in qualitative or quantitative field methods (601/602) or quantitative methods (705.)</b>
		<b>2009-11</b>	<b>Creation of paired courses from 611 (711), 620 (720) and 621 (721). Adoption of grad-level requirements, especially incorporating academic literature in course projects.</b>	<b>Establishment of MS in GIScience degree, starting Fall 2010, to be evaluated in next assessment period.</b>	<b>Development of special MA-level assignments and assessments during development of paired course proposals.</b>