

# SUNY Geneseo Social Science Core Assessment Report Spring 2004

Table 1 shows the cumulative frequencies for thirty-nine assessment reports. Reports for four courses have not been submitted.

**Table 1. Pooled Frequency Table**

	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Issues</b>
<b>Exceeding</b>	735	714	863
<b>Meeting</b>	927	1013	920
<b>Approaching</b>	323	284	256
<b>Not Meeting</b>	99	87	76
<b>Total</b>	2084	2098	2115 <sup>1</sup>

Table 2 shows the pooled percentage of students at each level for all three-assessment areas. These patterns in the assessment areas are essentially similar. The percentage of students exceeding the standard is greater in the Knowledge of Public Issues assessment area than in the other two areas by about five percentage points. Less than five percent of the students did not meet the standard in each assessment area.

The differences, small as they are, suggest that the courses in the Social Science Core are slightly better at making students aware of public issues than they are at developing knowledge of social science and social science methods.

**Table 2. Pooled Percentage Table**

	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Issues</b>
<b>Exceeding</b>	35.3%	34.0%	40.8%
<b>Meeting</b>	44.5%	48.3%	43.5%
<b>Approaching</b>	15.5%	13.5%	12.1%
<b>Not Meeting</b>	4.8%	4.1%	3.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

These pooled results conceal a large amount of variation among courses. See Table 3 below.

## **Recommendations for Social Science Core Committee**

1. Encourage instructors and departments in the Social Science Core to discuss the meaning of the assessment.
2. Discuss the meaning of the variation among courses.
3. Discuss the relation between the assessment rubric and the learning outcomes.
4. Modify the learning outcomes and the rubric to make them more consistent.

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<sup>1</sup> The totals for each area are not identical because some faculty used more than one assessment assignment and different numbers of students completed each assignment.

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Table 3 reports the mean percentage (and **standard deviation**) in individual course assessment reports. In general, the mean percentages are not too different from the pooled percentages. The standard deviations for the distributions of course assessment percentages are large. For example, the mean percentage of students assessed to be exceeding the standard in the Knowledge of Public Issues area is 44.7%, but the standard deviation,  $\pm 24.5$  percentage points, indicates a great deal of variation from course to course. We do not know what part of this is real variation among courses and what part is inconsistent application of the assessment rubric.

**Table 3. Mean Course Percentage and Standard Deviation**

	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Issues</b>
<b>Exceeding</b>	<b>35.2%</b>	<b>38.9%</b>	<b>44.7%</b>
SD	20.8%	19.7%	24.5%
<b>Meeting</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>44.3%</b>	<b>40.7%</b>
SD	15.9%	17.1%	21.7%
<b>Approaching</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>
SD	10.0%	6.9%	7.5%
<b>Not Meeting</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
SD	5.4%	4.7%	4.0%

Table 4 shows the kind of assignments faculty used to assess their classes. Most faculty used some form of essay (term paper, shorter paper, take-home exam, etc.). Most of those who used exams for assessment used short answer or essay questions for evaluation

<b>Table 4. Count of Assignment</b>	
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Total</b>
Essay	25
Exam	10
Exercise	1
Essay & exam	1
Missing	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>44</b>

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These three histograms show the distribution of proportion exceeding the standard for the 40 courses in the assessment report. All three are centered in the 20% to 40% range and are somewhat skewed toward higher values. Very few faculty indicated that more than 60% of their students were exceeding the standard for Knowledge of Social Science Methods or Knowledge of Social Science, whereas several faculty indicated that more than 60% of their students exceeded the standard for Knowledge of Public Issues.

