

Goal 3 Assessment Record

Goal 3 is as follows: Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.

Background

All institutions in the South Dakota Board of Regents system adhere to a common set of General Education Goals and Outcomes and policies governing General Education. (See <https://www.sdbor.edu/policy/documents/2-7.pdf>). The Goals are as follows:

- GOAL #1: Students will write effectively and responsibly and will understand and interpret the written expression of others.
- GOAL #2: Students will communicate effectively and responsibly through listening and speaking.
- GOAL #3: Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.
- GOAL #4: Students will understand the diversity and complexity of the human experience through study of the arts and humanities.
- GOAL #5: Students will understand and apply fundamental mathematical processes and reasoning.
- GOAL #6: Students will understand the fundamental principles of the natural sciences and apply scientific methods of inquiry to investigate the natural world.

From the mid-1990s to 2017, all “rising juniors” (i.e., students on the verge of entering their junior year) took the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) exam. Students had to pass all sections (i.e., math, writing, science reasoning, and reading) of the exams based on ‘cut scores’ set for the SD system in order to remain enrolled and complete their undergraduate degrees.

CAAP scores and sub-scores were therefore generated for ALL students and served as the system-wide assessment for the attainment of general educational outcomes.

Goals 1 and 2 are considered so critical to the professional preparation of STEM students, the faculty teaching composition, technical writing, and speech collaborate each year to conduct additional assessments.

Goals 3 and 4 are not adequately assessed via the CAAP exam in the view of SDSMT faculty members; therefore, instructors of humanities, history, psychology, and social science courses collaborate regularly to conduct additional assessments.

In 2016, the SD system ceased using the CAAP and developed an artifact-and-rubric-based assessment process that entails system-wide coordination. Implementation begins in fall 2017.

What this Document Contains

[Goal 3 assessment for 2010-2011](#)

[Goal 3 assessment for 2011-2012](#)

[Goal 3 assessment for 2012-2013](#)

[Goal 3 assessment for 2014-2015](#)

Assessment of GOAL 3: Social Sciences (2010-2011)

Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.

Student Learning Outcomes: As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:

1. Identify and explain basic concepts, terminology, and theories of the selected social science disciplines from different spatial, temporal, cultural, and/or instructional contexts.
2. Apply selected social science concepts and theories to contemporary issues.
3. Identify and explain the social or aesthetic values of different cultures.
4. In addition, as a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of at least one of the following:
 - The origin and evolution of human institutions.
 - The allocation of human or natural resources within societies.
 - The impact of diverse philosophical, ethical, or religious views.

Measures for Goal 3	Method of Analysis—if applicable	Metrics or standards of achievement
Select scores from the National Survey of Student Engagement, including questions 1e, 1u, 1v, 6e, 10c, and 11l	1e, 1u, 1v, 6e, 10c, and 11l	
Assessment of key concepts for social sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An instructor in history identified and assessed student understanding of a key concept in the social sciences	Using the concept of “human innovation,” the instructor of HIST 151 evaluated 50 in-class essays written in two sections during the fall 2009. Responses were evaluated on a 5-point scale, with 1 being “unacceptable” and 5 being “good.”	

Measures for Goal 3	Data / results
Select scores from the National Survey of Student Engagement, including questions 1e, 1u, 1v, 6e, 10c, and 11l	1e, 1u, 1v, 6e, 10c, and 11l (See below)
Assessment of key concepts for social sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An instructor in history identified and assessed student understanding of a key concept in the social sciences 	For the concept of “human innovation” assessed in fall 2009, all but 2 students scored between 4-5 points on their in-class essay responses by demonstrating assimilation of course materials and their ability to apply the concept of human innovation to an historical event.

Data / Results for GOAL 3: Social Sciences

Analysis / Conclusions Regarding Improvements for Goal 3: Social Sciences

- Using an in-class writing sample and a simple 5-point scale is a weak method for assessing a student’s ability to apply a fundamental social sciences concept to contemporary issues—as called for in the Goal 3 outcome.
- In-class writing is a performance assessment of many skills and behaviors, including the memorization of details and/or organizational and writing skills.
- A more refined or specialized rubric might do a better job of getting at the specific outcome of applying a concept from study of the social sciences.

Results for questions 1e, 1u, 1v, 6e, 10c, and 11l from NSSE 2008 compared to engineering students nationally (N= 11,000), engineering and science students nationally (N= 22,000), and also students in all institutions under Carnegie class 4/year public.

				School of Mines	School of Mines compared with:					
					ENG + SCI			ENG		
Variable	Bench- mark	Class		Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
				<i>In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Often, 4=Very often</i>						
1. Academic and Intellectual Experiences										
e.	Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	DIVCLASS	FY	2.34	2.47	*	-.14	2.42		-.09
			SR	1.99	2.21	***	-.24	2.11	*	-.14
u.	Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than your own	DIVRSTUD	EEE	2.20	2.61	***	-.41	2.64	***	-.45
			SR	2.32	2.69	***	-.37	2.74	***	-.42
v.	Had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	DIFFSTU2	EEE	2.55	2.66		-.12	2.68		-.13
			SR	2.42	2.69	***	-.27	2.71	***	-.30
6.e.	Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	OTHRVIEW	FY	2.61	2.64		-.03	2.61		.00
			SR	2.62	2.63		-.01	2.58		.05
10. Institutional Environment				<i>To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following? 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much</i>						
			SR	2.79	2.83		-.05	2.82		-.04
c.	Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	ENVDIVRS	EEE	2.37	2.60	***	-.23	2.62	***	-.26
			SR	2.06	2.32	***	-.27	2.30	***	-.25
11 Educational and Personal Growth				<i>To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? 1=Very little, 2=Some, 3=Quite a bit, 4=Very much</i>						
1.	Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	GNDIVERS	FY	2.17	2.47	***	-.31	2.48	***	-.32
			SR	1.94	2.32	***	-.39	2.30	***	-.38

Assessment of GOAL 3: Social Sciences (2011-2012)

A Group Summary Report for the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction was obtained for Spring 2011 for 5 course sections that include **SDBOR General Education Goal 3** as a course goal:

- 2 sections of GEOG 212—Geography of North America
- 1 section of POLS 250—World Politics
- 2 sections of PSYC 101—General Psychology

Summary: The group report shows that overall instructional effectiveness was unusually high for all five Goal 3 sections surveyed.

Department of Social Sciences faculty met on **15 November 2011** to discuss the report. The following Social Sciences faculty participated: R. Dendinger, J. Dreyer, S. Goss, S. Kirkpatrick-Sanchez, S. Shirley, and F. Van Nuys.

Return Rate: Observations

- Three of the 5 sections had a response rate below 65%, the rate considered minimal for dependable results.
- The average response rate for the 5 sections was 63%. Consequently, the data cannot be considered statistically dependable.

Discussion:

- *It can be difficult to get students to respond to the online survey unless some kind of incentive (e.g., extra points) is offered.*
- *A return to paper and pen evaluations in Spring 2012 should result in an increased response rate.*

Section I: Faculty Selection of Important and Essential Objectives: Observations

The Social Science faculty participating in the group report agreed to mark Objectives 1, 2, and 11 as Essential or Important. All three objectives were marked by the faculty for all five sections surveyed. No other objectives were marked.

Section II: Student Ratings of Overall Outcomes – Comparison to IDEA Database:

Observations

- Part 1 shows that the distribution of ratings differs from the expectation: Actual ratings for the bottom 30% are lower than expected. In fact, no responses were received for the lowest 30%. Actual ratings for the top 30% are higher than expected, particularly for “excellence of teacher” (60% in the “higher” category).
- In Part 2, average converted scores (55-57) are higher than the IDEA database average of 50-51.
- Part 3 shows the percentage of classes at or above the IDEA database average. One hundred percent of the classes surveyed are higher than the IDEA average.

Discussion:

- *According to the IDEA results, “overall instructional effectiveness was unusually high” for all five sections surveyed.*

Section III: Student Ratings of Overall Outcomes—Comparison to This Institution:

Observations

General Education Documentation for Mines: <http://www.sdsmt.edu/Academics/Office-of-the-Provost/Assessment/General-Education-Assessment/>

- Part 1 shows that the distribution of ratings differs from the expectation: Actual ratings for the bottom 30% are lower than expected. In fact, no responses were received for the lowest 30%. Actual ratings for the top 30% are higher than expected, particularly for “excellence of teacher” (60% in the “higher” category).
- In Part 2, average converted scores (57-59) are higher than the institution average of 50.
- Part 3 shows the percentage of classes at or above the institution average. One hundred percent of the classes surveyed are higher than the institution average.

Discussion:

- *According to the IDEA results, the quality of instruction for the group surveyed is well above the institutional average.*

Section IV: Student Ratings of Progression on E and I Objectives: Observations

- For **Objective 1:** Gaining factual knowledge, the raw average of **4.4** is higher than both the institutional and the IDEA system averages. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in 100% of the classes surveyed compared to only about 55% of classes in the IDEA system.
- For **Objective 2:** Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories, the raw average of **4.3** is higher than both the institution and the IDEA system averages. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in 100% of the classes surveyed compared to about 50% of classes in the IDEA system.
- For **Objective 11:** Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view, the raw average of **4.1** is higher than both the institution and the IDEA system averages. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in about 80% of the classes surveyed compared to about 45% of classes in the IDEA system.

Discussion:

- *The ratings for Objectives 1 and 2 suggest that we are doing well in helping students meet these objectives. This is an area of strength for us.*
- *While still an area of strength, the ratings for Objective 11 suggest that students may misinterpret the questions related to the objective, or the objective may be emphasized differently in the different sections.*

Section V: Teaching Methods and Styles: Observations

These results apply only to those areas/questions associated with Objectives 1, 2, and 11.

- In the area of **Stimulating Student Interest**, students in 40 - 100% of the classes marked frequently for the four questions associated with this area.
- In the area of **Fostering Student Collaboration**, students in 80% of the classes marked frequently for “asked students to share ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own.”
- In the area of **Establishing Rapport**, students in 60% of the classes marked frequently for “found ways to help students answer their own questions” and “explained the reasons for criticisms of students’ academic performance.”
- In the area of **Encouraging Student Involvement**, students in 60% of the classes marked frequently for “gave projects, tests, or assignments that required original or creative thinking.”
- In the area of **Structuring Classroom Experience**, students in 80 – 100% of the classes marked frequently for “made it clear how each topic fit into the course,” “explained course material clearly and concisely,” and “gave tests, projects, etc., that covered the most important points of the course.”
- For the three objectives chosen, no method was marked as used infrequently.

Discussion:

- *We have multiple strengths in teaching methods and styles.*
- *The results suggest that students find the courses interesting and stimulating.*

- *The students appear to be satisfied with the selected teaching methods and styles.*

Section VI: Student Self-ratings and Ratings of Course Characteristics: Observations

- Students' self-reporting of their "desire to take this course" shows an average of 3.8, which is slightly above the institutional average of 3.6 and the IDEA system average of 3.7.
- In general, students reported "put[ting] forth more effort than other students on academic work" (3.6) but did not necessarily work "harder on this course than on most courses" (3.2). No classes reported an effort below 3.0 or above 4.0.
- Students' self-reporting shows the "difficulty of subject matter" at an average of 3.1, below the institutional average of 3.5 and the IDEA system average of 3.4. In 40% of the classes, students marked difficulty at below 3.0. No classes reported difficulty at above 4.0.
- The students' self-reported attitude as a result of taking the course (4.1 raw/4.1 adjusted) is above the average for both the institution (3.7/3.6) and the IDEA system (3.9/3.9).

Discussion:

- *Students think they work hard overall on their academic work but they don't feel they work particularly hard in the classes surveyed.*
- *Students may interpret "difficulty" differently than we do. Difficulty of subject matter is different from difficulty of course.*
- *The results don't necessarily suggest "complaining" about difficulty.*
- *Students appear to have positive attitudes about the courses.*
- *Students may consider our courses "easier" when compared to their science/engineering courses.*

Recommendations:

Overall: Repeat the group report in Spring 2012. Dendinger, Dreyer, Kirkpatrick-Sanchez, and Van Nuys will include their Goal 3 courses in the report and use the same objectives.

Additional observations:

- Increasing the response rate should be a primary concern/goal.
- The response rate should be much higher in all courses after we return to paper and pencil evaluations, so a follow-up group report would be valuable.
- Beyond this coming spring semester, perhaps we could rotate other Goal 3 courses into an annual group report.
- Because we did well on the three objectives we chose for the group report courses, we should stick with those three objectives when we repeat the group report in the spring.
- We can add individual questions to the IDEA surveys, so perhaps we could write specific questions to use in all of the group report classes to get a better sense of how our "strengths" actually break down as faculty behaviors.

Submitted January 2012

General Education Documentation for Mines: <http://www.sdsmt.edu/Academics/Office-of-the-Provost/Assessment/General-Education-Assessment/>

Assessment of GOAL 3: Social Sciences (2012-2013)

A **Group Summary Report for the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction** was obtained for Spring 2012 for 5 course sections that include **SDBOR General Education Goal 3** as a course goal:

- 1 section of GEOG 212—Geography of North America
- 1 section of POLS 250—World Politics
- 2 sections of PSYC 101—General Psychology
- 1 section of HIST 152 – U.S. History

Summary: The group report shows that overall instructional effectiveness was unusually high for all five Goal 3 sections surveyed.

Department of Social Sciences faculty met on **December 10, 2012**, to discuss the report. The following Social Sciences faculty participated: R. Dendinger, F. Van Nuys, J. Dreyer, and S. Shirley.

Return Rate: Observations

- The average response rate for the 5 sections was 79%, up from 63% for 2011. Consequently, the data can be considered statistically dependable.

Discussion:

- *Apparently, a return to paper and pen evaluations in Spring 2012 resulted in an increased response rate. Paper and pen will be used for the Spring 2013 evaluations.*

Section I: Faculty Selection of Important and Essential Objectives: Observations

The Social Science faculty participating in the group report agreed to mark Objectives 1, 2, and 11 as Essential or Important. All three objectives were marked by the faculty for all five sections surveyed. No other objectives were marked.

Section II: Student Ratings of Overall Outcomes – Comparison to IDEA Database:

Observations

- Part 1 shows that the distribution of ratings differs from the expectation: Actual ratings for the bottom 30% are lower than expected. In fact, no responses were received for the lowest 30%. Actual ratings for the top 30% are higher than expected, particularly for “excellence of teacher” (60% in the “higher” category).
- In Part 2, average converted scores (54-59) are down slightly from 2011 (55-57) but are still higher than the IDEA database average of 50-51.
- Part 3 shows the percentage of classes at or above the IDEA database average. One hundred percent of the classes surveyed are higher than the IDEA average.

Discussion:

- *According to the IDEA results, “overall instructional effectiveness was unusually high” for all five sections surveyed.*

Section III: Student Ratings of Overall Outcomes—Comparison to This Institution:

Observations

- Part 1 shows that the distribution of ratings differs from the expectation: Actual ratings for the bottom 30% are lower than expected. In fact, no responses were received for the lowest 30%. Actual ratings for the top 30% are higher than expected, particularly for “excellence of teacher” (60% in the “higher” category).
- In Part 2, average converted scores changed slightly (from 57-59 in 2011 to 54-59 in 2012) but are still higher than the institution average of 50.

- Part 3 shows the percentage of classes at or above the institution average. One hundred percent of the classes surveyed are higher than the institution average.

Discussion:

- *According to the IDEA results, the quality of instruction for the group surveyed is well above the institutional average.*

Section IV: Student Ratings of Progression on E and I Objectives: Observations

- For **Objective 1:** Gaining factual knowledge, the raw average of **4.3** is higher than both the institutional and the IDEA system averages, although this is a slight drop from 4.4 in 2011. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in 100% of the classes surveyed compared to only about 55% of classes in the IDEA system.
- For **Objective 2:** Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories, the raw average dropped from **4.3** to **4.2** but remains higher than both the institution and the IDEA system averages. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in 80% of the classes surveyed compared to about 50% of classes in the IDEA system.
- For **Objective 11:** Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view, the raw average dropped from 4.1 to **3.9** but remains higher than both the institution and the IDEA system averages. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in 20% of the classes surveyed compared to about 45% of classes in the IDEA system.

Discussion:

- *The ratings for Objectives 1 and 2 suggest that we are doing well in helping students meet these objectives. This is an area of strength for us.*
- *While still an area of strength, the ratings for Objective 11 suggest that students may misinterpret the questions related to the objective, or the objective may be emphasized differently in different sections.*

Section V: Teaching Methods and Styles: Observations

These results apply only to those areas/questions associated with Objectives 1, 2, and 11.

- In the area of **Stimulating Student Interest**, students in 20 - 80% of the classes marked frequently for the four questions associated with this area. This is a drop from 40-100%.
- In the area of **Fostering Student Collaboration**, students in 80% of the classes marked frequently for “asked students to share ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own.”
- In the area of **Establishing Rapport**, students in 20-40% of the classes marked frequently for “found ways to help students answer their own questions” and “explained the reasons for criticisms of students’ academic performance.” This is a drop from 60% in 2011.
- In the area of **Encouraging Student Involvement**, students in 20% of the classes marked frequently for “gave projects, tests, or assignments that required original or creative thinking.” This is a drop from 60% in 2011.
- In the area of **Structuring Classroom Experience**, students in 60 – 80% of the classes marked frequently for “made it clear how each topic fit into the course,” “explained course material clearly and concisely,” and “gave tests, projects, etc., that covered the most important points of the course.” This is a drop from 80-100% in 2011.
- For the three objectives chosen, no method was marked as used infrequently.

Discussion:

- *We have multiple strengths in teaching methods and styles.*
- *The results suggest that students find the courses interesting and stimulating.*
- *The students appear to be satisfied with the selected teaching methods and styles.*
- *The changes in percentages from 2011 to 2012 in Section V are slight, for the most part, and are not a cause for concern.*

Section VI: Student Self-ratings and Ratings of Course Characteristics: Observations

- Students' self-reporting of their "desire to take this course" shows an average of 3.9 (an increase from 3.8 in 2011) which is slightly above the institutional average of 3.7 and the IDEA system average of 3.7.
- In general, students reported "put[ting] forth more effort than other students on academic work" (3.5) but did not necessarily work "harder on this course than on most courses" (3.0). None of the classes reported an effort below 3.0 or above 4.0.
- Students' self-reporting shows the "difficulty of subject matter" at an average of 2.9, below the institutional average of 3.5 and the IDEA system average of 3.4. In 60% of the classes, students marked difficulty at below 3.0. No classes reported difficulty at above 4.0.
- The students' self-reported attitude as a result of taking the course (4.2 raw/4.3 adjusted) is above the average for both the institution (3.8/3.6) and the IDEA system (3.9/3.9). According to the Summary Report, "this item is most meaningful for courses taken by many non-majors."

Discussion:

- *Students think they work hard overall on their academic work but they don't feel they work particularly hard in the classes surveyed.*
- *Students may interpret "difficulty" differently than we do. Difficulty of subject matter is different from difficulty of course.*
- *The results don't necessarily suggest "complaining" about difficulty.*
- *Students appear to have positive attitudes about the courses.*
- *Students may consider our courses "easier" when compared to their science/engineering courses.*

Recommendations:

Overall: Repeat the group report in Spring 2013. Dendinger, Dreyer, Kirkpatrick-Sanchez, and Van Nuys will include their Goal 3 courses in the report and use the same objectives.

Additional observations:

- Maintaining a high response rate should be a primary concern/goal.
- Beyond this coming spring semester, perhaps we could rotate other Goal 3 courses into an annual group report.
- Because we did well on the three objectives we chose for the group report courses, we should stick with those three objectives when we repeat the group report in the spring.

Submitted December 2012
Notes by Dr. Roger Dendinger

Assessment of GOAL 3: Social Sciences (2014-2015)

A **Group Summary Report for the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction** was obtained for Spring 2015 for 8 course sections that include **SDBOR General Education Goal 3** as a course goal:

- 2 section of GEOG 212—Geography of North America
- 1-2 section of POLS 250—World Politics*
- 1-2 sections of PSYC 101—General Psychology
- 1-3 sections of SOC 100—Introduction to Sociology and SOC 150—Social Problems
- 1 section of HIST 152 – U.S. History

*We requested that ten sections of the courses listed above be used in the group report. However, only 8 sections were used; we are unsure which two sections were excluded.

Summary: The group report shows that overall instructional effectiveness was high for all Goal 3 sections surveyed.

Department of Social Sciences faculty met on **September 29, 2015**, to discuss the report. The following Social Sciences faculty participated: R. Dendinger, F. Van Nuys, J. Dreyer, K. Pritchard, J. Gibson, and S. Shirley.

Return Rate: Observations

- The average response rate for the 5 sections was 81%, up from 79% for 2012. Consequently, the data can be considered statistically dependable.

Discussion:

- *The use of paper and pen evaluations in Spring 2015 resulted in the positive response rate. Paper and pen will be used for the Fall 2015 evaluations.*

Section I: Faculty Selection of Important and Essential Objectives: Observations

The Social Science faculty participating in the group report agreed to mark Objectives 1, 2, and 11 as Essential or Important. All three objectives were marked by the faculty for all sections surveyed. No other objectives were marked.

Section II: Student Ratings of Overall Outcomes – Comparison to IDEA Database:

Observations

- Part 1 shows that the distribution of ratings differs from the expectation: Actual ratings for the bottom 30% are lower than expected. In fact, no responses were received for the lowest 30%. Actual ratings for the top 30% are higher than expected, particularly for “excellence of teacher” (50% in the “higher” category).
- In Part 2, average converted scores (53-55) are down slightly from 2012 (54-59) but are still higher than the IDEA database average of 50-51.
- Part 3 shows the percentage of classes at or above the IDEA database average. The summary score shows that 88% of the classes surveyed are higher than the IDEA average.

Discussion:

- *According to the IDEA results, “overall instructional effectiveness was unusually high” for all sections surveyed.*

Section III: Student Ratings of Overall Outcomes—Comparison to This Institution:

Observations

- Part 1 shows that the distribution of ratings differs from the expectation: Actual ratings for the bottom 30% are lower than expected. In fact, no responses were received for the lowest 30%. Actual ratings for the top 30% are higher than expected, particularly for “excellence of teacher” (50% in the “higher” category).

General Education Documentation for Mines: <http://www.sdsmt.edu/Academics/Office-of-the-Provost/Assessment/General-Education-Assessment/>

- In Part 2, average converted scores changed slightly (from 54-59 in 2012 to 52-57 in 2015) but are still higher than the institution average of 50.
- Part 3 shows the percentage of classes at or above the institution average. The summary scores show that 88% of the classes surveyed are higher than the institution average.

Discussion:

- *According to the IDEA results, the quality of instruction for the group surveyed is well above the institutional average and shows consistency across several years.*

Section IV: Student Ratings of Progression on E and I Objectives: Observations

- For **Objective 1:** Gaining factual knowledge, the raw average of **4.3** is higher than both the institutional and the IDEA system averages. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in 88% of the classes surveyed compared to only about 54% of classes in the IDEA system.
- For **Objective 2:** Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories, the raw average of 4.1 is the same as the institution average and slightly higher than the IDEA system average. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in 88% of the classes surveyed compared to 50% of classes in the IDEA system.
- For **Objective 11:** Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view, the raw average of 4.0 is higher than both the institution and the IDEA system averages. The bar graph shows that the raw average was at least 4.0 in more than 60% of the classes surveyed compared to about 40% of classes at the institution and 45% of classes in the IDEA system.

Discussion:

- *The ratings for Objectives 1, 2, and 11 suggest that we are doing well in helping students meet these objectives. This is an area of strength for us.*
- *The ratings suggest that we are choosing appropriate objectives.*

Section V: Teaching Methods and Styles: Observations

These results apply only to those areas/questions associated with Objectives 1, 2, and 11 and only to those courses for which the diagnostic (long) form was used.

- In the area of **Stimulating Student Interest**, students in 40 - 80% of the classes marked frequently for two questions associated with this area.
- In the area of **Fostering Student Collaboration**, students in 60% of the classes marked frequently for “asked students to share ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own.” This is a drop from 80% in 2012.
- In the area of **Establishing Rapport**, students in 20% of the classes marked frequently for “found ways to help students answer their own questions” and “explained the reasons for criticisms of students’ academic performance.” This is a drop from 40% in 2012.
- In the area of **Encouraging Student Involvement**, students in 40% of the classes marked frequently for “gave projects, tests, or assignments that required original or creative thinking.” This is an increase from 20% in 2012.
- In the area of **Structuring Classroom Experience**, students in 60 – 80% of the classes marked frequently for “made it clear how each topic fit into the course” and “explained course material clearly and concisely.” Students in 20% of the courses marked frequently for “gave tests, projects, etc., that covered the most important points of the course.” These scores are similar to those in 2012
- For the three objectives chosen, six methods were marked as used infrequently: Demonstrated importance and significance of subject matter (20%); stimulated students to intellectual effort beyond that required by most courses (40%); inspired students to set and achieve goals which really challenged them (60%); gave projects, tests, or assignments that required original or creative thinking (20%); made clear how each topic fit into the course (20%); gave tests, projects, etc. that covered the most important points of the course (60%).

Discussion:

- *The results suggest that students like the courses but may not understand the IDEA questions.*

General Education Documentation for Mines: <http://www.sdsmt.edu/Academics/Office-of-the-Provost/Assessment/General-Education-Assessment/>

- *The students appear to be satisfied overall with the selected teaching methods and styles.*
- *The changes in percentages from 2012 to 2015 in Section V are slight, for the most part, and are not a cause for concern.*

Section VI: Student Self-ratings and Ratings of Course Characteristics: Observations

- Students' self-reporting of their "desire to take this course" shows an average of 3.4 (a decrease from 3.9 in 2012), which is below the institutional average of 3.7 and the IDEA system average of 3.7.
- In general, students reported "put[ting] forth more effort than other students on academic work" (3.5) but did not necessarily work "harder on this course than on most courses" (3.0). None of the classes reported an effort above 4.0.
- Students' self-reporting shows the "difficulty of subject matter" at an average of 2.8, below the institutional average of 3.5 and the IDEA system average of 3.4. In 80% of the classes, students marked difficulty at below 3.0. No classes show difficulty at 4.0 or higher.
- The students' self-reported attitude as a result of taking the course (4.0 raw/4.0 adjusted) is slightly above the average for both the institution (3.9/3.6) and the IDEA system (3.9/3.9). According to the Summary Report, "this item is most meaningful for courses taken by many non-majors."

Discussion:

- *Students think they work hard overall on their academic work but they don't feel they work particularly hard in the Goal 3 classes surveyed.*
- *Students may interpret "difficulty" differently than we do. Difficulty of subject matter is different from difficulty of course.*
- *Students appear to have positive attitudes overall about the courses surveyed.*
- *Students may consider our courses "easier" when compared to their science/engineering courses. However, students' primary concern is with their performance in their technical courses.*
- *The results may reflect the changing demographics of our student body, with different expectations, cultural shifts, and a decrease in level of preparation for college level work affecting both their attitudes and their performance.*

Recommendations:

Overall: Repeat the group report in Fall 2015 in all Goal 3 courses.

Additional observations:

- Maintaining a consistently high response rate should continue to be a group goal.
- Because we did well on the three objectives we chose for the group report courses, we should stick with those three objectives when we repeat the group report in the fall.

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Notes by Dr. Sue Shirley