

# Academic Program Assessment Report

**Assessment** is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that an institution "identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results".

## Be sure to **SAVE** your progress as you work!

### Academic Program

Interdisciplinary Studies, BS/BA

### Submission Due Date

2024-2025

### Assessment Coordinator Name

Lillian Craton

### Enter Assessment Coordinator Email

lcraton@lander.edu

## Program Goal

### Goal

#### Goal 1

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

#### Program Goal

To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

#### Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

#### What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

**Enter Outcome**  
Major Enrollment

**Timeframe for this Outcome**  
Academic Year 2023-24

**Performance Target for "Met"**  
Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major for a Baccalaureate program is greater than or equal to 12.5.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**  
Not applicable

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**  
Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major for a Baccalaureate program is less than 12.5.

**Assessment Measure Used**  
Enrollment and graduation data extracted from Banner

**Frequency of Assessment**  
Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**  
22.2

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**  
3

**Comments/Narrative**  
Enrollment in IDS remained strong, although we anticipate a significant dip in 24-25 as students departing the teacher education program now have a freestanding major within College of Education as their landing point.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

## Outcome 2

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

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**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**  
Operational Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Completions (Degrees Awarded)

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2023-24

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 8.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

Not applicable

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded for Baccalaureate programs is less than 8.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Enrollment and Graduated data extracted from Banner

**Frequency of Assessment**

annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

13

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

**Comments/Narrative**

Completion rate of the IDS program dipped slightly this year but remains healthy. We expect a larger dip in both overall enrollment and number of graduates as some education-focused students migrate to the IDS-inspired programs within the College of Education, but we will work to counteract that effect with recruitment for IDS emphases in other fields.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

As noted in previous reports, the IDS program serves multiple purposes: 1. To test possible disciplinary combinations that can be turned into standalone majors, as happened with the Nursing/Health Promotion IDS program's evolution into the Lander Public Health major. 2. To allow students to target specific job fields that do not flow naturally out of existing majors, and 3. To facilitate timely graduation for students who, through transfers or personal circumstances, are unable to progress in their original major. The approval of new opportunities in College of Education for students seeking careers as child life specialists or early childhood interventionists has begun to reduce future demand for corresponding IDS emphases that have been consistently popular. Nonetheless, this is a sign of programmatic success.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

In order to diversify IDS offerings and recruit new students, we have increased the flow of information about IDS to the student body at large. This has led to some meaningful opportunities for individual students, including a Science Media emphasis as well as an Environmental Education emphasis.

**Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

## Goal 2

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

### Program Goal

Students will gain the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate scholarship/research from their academic fields.

### Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

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Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

### What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

### Enter Outcome

Students will convey an understanding of an in-depth research topic within their chosen disciplines via their research poster.

### Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2023-24

### Performance Target for "Met"

The average portfolio score for "Understanding of Research" based on research poster is 2.5 to 3.0.

### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

The average portfolio score for "Understanding of Research" based on research poster falls between 2.0 and 2.5.

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

The average portfolio score for "Understanding of Research" based on research poster falls below 2.0.

### Assessment Measure Used

Senior Portfolio (Academic Symposium research poster and presentation)

### Frequency of Assessment

Annually

### Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

Average portfolio "Understanding of Research" score of 2.69 (out of 3) 3

### **Comments/Narrative**

IDS seniors once again participated in the Academic Symposium's research poster session and included their posters in their portfolios. Preparation for this activity was a major focus of IDS 499 and we were pleased with the results. The average portfolio research poster score increased by 0.14 in spite of the fact that few students in this cohort had any significant research experience prior to IDS 499, which is very reassuring. We believe that some changes in the project timeline increased the success of student projects. We also observed that the least-successful students were those who took the IDS 499 class remotely, so we intend to limit that option to be used only when absolutely necessary.

### **Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

### **Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

## **Outcome 2**

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

### **What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

### **Enter Outcome**

Students will convey an understanding of an in-depth research topic within their chosen disciplines via their research-based oral presentation.

### **Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2023-24

### **Performance Target for "Met"**

The average portfolio score for "Understanding of Research" based on research presentation is 2.5 to 3.0.

### **Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

The average portfolio score for "Understanding of Research" based on research presentation is 2.0 to 2.5.

### **Performance Target for "Not Met"**

The average portfolio score for "Understanding of Research" based on research presentation is below 2.0

**Assessment Measure Used**

The Academic Symposium research presentation

**Frequency of Assessment**

Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

2.77

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

**Comments/Narrative**

This score continued to increase, partly reflecting improved overall quality of the research projects and partly due to additional presentation practice added to IDS 499 over the last 3 semesters. The presentation scores remain somewhat higher than the poster scores for this outcome. We believe this represents a larger trend at Lander: that many of our students are less confident with written communication than verbal communication.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results****Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

The average of the two sub-scores for this goal was 2.73 for the 2023-4 cohort, a significant improvement from 2.6 the previous year year. The decision in 2022 to evaluate the research assignments through two different lenses beginning, written and verbal presentation, helped identify gaps in mentorship for oral presentations, and in fact those scores are now higher than the poster scores.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

We are seeing benefit from recent curricular changes. Beginning in Spring 2023, we implement assessment scoring for this goal within the judging process for Academic Symposium rather than use a recorded presentation. While we anticipated a possible decrease in scores as a result (since students would not have a "do over" as with a recorded presentation), the opposite was true: scores improved. We credit additional practice added to the IDS 499 syllabus as well as additional interaction with faculty during the presentation to draw out student knowledge. Beginning in Fall 2023, we elongated the timeline for the IDS 499 senior research project, leaving more time to edit and refine student work prior to presentation. Additional in-class presentation rehearsals calmed students' nerves and reinforced their skills, and additional one-on-one meeting time for poster editing and development enhanced the final product. As a result, the overall project quality improved significantly this year. Moving forward, we intend to limit the use of remote work for IDS 499 to only those situations where absolutely necessary after observing a performance gap between remote and in-person students.

**Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

IDS assessment rubrics.docx

## Goal 3

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

**Program Goal**

Students will communicate effectively about their education, skills, and professional goals.

**Pillar of Success Supported**  
High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

#### Enter Outcome

Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills when discussing their education, skills, and professional goals.

#### Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2023-24

#### Performance Target for "Met"

Average portfolio score for "Verbal Communication" is 2.5 to 3.0.

#### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Average portfolio score for "Verbal Communication" is 2.0 to 2.5.

#### Performance Target for "Not Met"

Average portfolio score for "Verbal Communication" is below 2.0.

#### Assessment Measure Used

Senior Portfolio (mock job interview, Academic Symposium presentation)

#### Frequency of Assessment

Annual

#### Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

2.76

#### Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

#### Comments/Narrative

Scores rose significantly in this outcome in 2023-4. Some of the variation probably reflected the personalities in this cohort: we did not have any students who struggled terribly with fear of public speaking, as has sometime been the case. Additional presentation practice added to IDS 101 in 2022 and IDS 499 in 2023 continues to help, as did a Fall 2023 extension of the research project timeline that allowed students to feel more confident about their content prior to presentations.

#### Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

## Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

### Outcome 2

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Students will demonstrate effective writing skills for professional communication.

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2023-24

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Average portfolio score for "Written Communication" is 2.5 to 3.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

Average portfolio score for "Written Communication" is 2.0 to 2.5.

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Average portfolio score for "Written Communication" is below 2.0.

**Assessment Measure Used**

The educational autobiography and IDS definition essay (included in the senior portfolio)

**Frequency of Assessment**

Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

2.46

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

2

**Comments/Narrative**

In 2022, we updated the wording of our rubric to explicitly include a threshold for surface errors (a reflection of grammar and proofreading skills) to meet this goal. As a result, our writing subscore dropped significantly with these more precise criteria, down to 2.25 in 2022 and rebounding to 2.43 in 2023. While this goal was partially met, we are pleased to see continued increase in 2023. We believe this resulted from additional editing time created by changes in the IDS 499 timeline. However, few of our students would have met this goal without extensive coaching: rough drafts were rough. Almost all IDS 101 and 499 assignments emphasize communication skills as a key focus. However, because students take only 6 credit hours in IDS classes, we have limited class time to develop their writing skills. As a result, this score reflects the writing instruction and feedback students received throughout



their time at Lander. In general, we believe that Lander students would benefit from increased practice time and increased rigor in writing.

### Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

### Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

## Outcome 3

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

### What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

### Enter Outcome

Students will effectively communicate the value of interdisciplinary scholarship and the skills gained through the IDS major and chosen emphasis.

### Timeframe for this Outcome

2023-24

### Performance Target for "Met"

Average portfolio score for "Understanding of Interdisciplinary Scholarship" is 2.5 to 3.

### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Average portfolio score for "Understanding of Interdisciplinary Scholarship" is 2.0 to 2.5.

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

Average portfolio score for "Understanding of Interdisciplinary Scholarship" is below 2.

### Assessment Measure Used

Senior Portfolio (interdisciplinary studies definition essay and mock job interview)

### Frequency of Assessment

Annual

### Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

2.69

### Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

### Comments/Narrative

Students continue to score well in this measurement: scores increased slightly from last year. It appears the IDS 101 and 499 courses are providing the necessary information and practice for students to confidently define interdisciplinary scholarship and elaborate its benefits (an important skill for their ability to gain value from their degrees on the job market). Since this skill is a main focus for the IDS

101 and 499 courses, this outcome is more within our control than the more holistic verbal and written communication outcomes, and we believe it continues to be a successful aspect of the program.

#### **Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

#### **Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

## **Goal Summary**

### **Goal Summary/Comments**

The importance of polished communication is emphasized throughout IDS 101 and 499, and students are challenged to talk and write both in academic and professional contexts. Although many of our students are reluctant writers, the ability to select their research topics and write about their own skills and educational experiences in IDS 499 garnered some enthusiasm. We continue to find that IDS majors are not as highly skilled in grammar and compositional skills as we would like, but that they articulate important ideas verbally with greater confidence. Since these communication skills are honed by all Lander classes and not just the two IDS classes each of our majors takes, we believe they reflect on Lander's overall strengths and areas for growth as well as on the program's.

### **Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

In 2023-24, an elongated timeline for the IDS 499 research project enhanced the time we had for rehearsal of oral presentations and copy-editing of portfolio documents. We saw progress in both oral and written communication this year, resulting in an uptick in scores in both areas. Editing is essential, and students learn important processes from this work. However, students will also need to quickly produce written texts with minimal feedback (such as email) in their professional careers, and we are less confident about their success with unassisted writing. Moving forward, we plan to gather some data about progress in written communication over the course of the semester for IDS 499. Instead of just scoring the final drafts of the written portfolio, we will also informally score the rough drafts to better assess students' baseline performance without extensive coaching. Based on this information, we may add some additional quick-writing assignments in IDS 101 and 499 and/or engage more directly with the assistance tools such as Grammarly and ChatGPT that students may be likely to use in their professions.

### **Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

#### **Dean's Email Address**

jcolbert@lander.edu

#### **Approved by Dean?**

Yes

#### **Signature of Dean**

James E. Colbert

#### **Comments from Dean's Review**

**Thank you for reviewing and approving this report. The approval and a copy of the report will be emailed to you and the Assessment Coordinator.**