

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

Fall 2025: October 1, 2025

Assessment Coordinator Name

Lillian Craton

Enter Assessment Coordinator Email

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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 2024-25

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)

21.4

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

3

Comments/Narrative

We saw a small drop in this measure, which was expected. We anticipated a dip in IDS enrollment in 2024-25 as students departing the teacher education program now have a freestanding major within College of Education as their landing point. To generate new enrollment, we have begun sending regular recruiting emails to LU students and have worked closely with the transfer advisor to identify students who'd benefit from an IDS major.

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?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Completions (Degrees Awarded)

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-25

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)

11.6

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Completion rate of the IDS program dipped significantly, as expected. We expected a large dip in both overall enrollment and number of graduates as education-focused students migrate to the IDS-inspired programs within the College of Education. We are working 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

This year marked the long-expected drop in IDS enrollment as students previously channeled to IDS from the College of Education graduated. While our enrollment numbers declined, the bandwidth created by this change allowed time to develop more individualized IDS plans for unique student situations, and also to revisit and improve existing IDS emphases in Education to target specific career paths such as speech pathology and school counseling. (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 are emailing the student body each semester with a reminder that IDS is an option, and we have increased our collaboration with the Student Success transfer advisor to develop new programs that optimize students' use of transfer credit. In the 2024-25 academic year, we created and approved IDS plans in Human Services Management, Public Health Management, and Educational Programming and Communication. We also created several new plans over Summer 2025.

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

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 poster.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-25

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)

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

Average portfolio "Understanding of Research" score of 2.66 (out of 3)

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

3

Comments/Narrative

This score dropped slightly from last year, although with a cohort of six, it is difficult to know whether that change reflects changes in the program or simply the effect of individual student performance. Preparation for this activity is a major focus of IDS 499. We observed for the second year in a row that the least-successful student was the one who took the IDS 499 class remotely, so we will continue to limit that option to be used only when absolutely necessary. Two of six students did not fully meet this goal. One of those two was the student who took IDS 499 remotely and struggled with personal challenges during the semester. The other student demonstrated appropriate knowledge of research verbally but did not invest enough time developing the poster. Though program changes will not eliminate the problems that interfere with individual students' success, we are making a note of the importance of intervening early when students show signs of struggling with time management.

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 2024-25

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)

2.5

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Due to one outlier in our group of 6 students, this score dropped significantly this year (from 2.77 last year), also dropping below the score based on the research poster for the first time. Of the students who took IDS 499 in spring, only two students followed through with an Academic Symposium presentation this year, but both were exceptionally good. The third spring student struggled with the assignment for personal reasons, and with a small cohort, that student's scores significantly lowered the overall score for the year. Fall students presented in the IDS 101 class, and while this is a less-intimidating environment, they communicated their research ideas well. Because of the outlier who failed to complete a presentation and received a 0 score, the overall score for this measurement dropped in spite of the fact that 5 out of 6 students fully met the goal, and many of them excelled far beyond that goal. However, the pattern in these scores suggest that students do remain more comfortable with oral communication than with verbal communication, and that the presentation-preparation plans implemented in IDS 499 in Spring 2024 continue to be successful.

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 2.58 this year, down from 2.73 for the 2023-4 cohort, a drop (but on part with the 2222-23 cohort's score of 2.6). This was a small cohort of 6 students, and the drop seems to have come primarily from one student's failure to complete an important presentation. Our data does not measure the number of students who significantly exceed expectations, but it's worth noting that this year's research projects included two pieces of exceptional student work that went far beyond requirements. We decided in 2022 to evaluate the research assignments through two different lenses, written and verbal communication. While the numeric data does not reflect this trend due to an outlier in our small cohort, faculty perception is that our students excelled in oral communication this year and that the enhanced presentation prep added to the IDS 499 syllabus continues to pay off.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

The decrease in IDS student enrollment as a result of curriculum changes in the College of Education has had an unintended benefit. For the most part, current IDS majors chose this program because it aligned with their career goals, not as an escape route from a major that wasn't working for them. That means that IDS is attracting a larger percentage of honors students (one third of the students in this cohort) and students with a deep professional interest in their majors. In order to better meet the needs of these students, the Spring 2026 IDS 499 class will experiment with a revised research assignment that is less rigid and allows students more leeway to adapt the assignment to their own goals. We hope to continue to see what occurred in 2023-24: that ambitious students will exceed our program's requirements and take on significant research challenges. We are also seeing an ongoing benefit from a 2023 curricular change that is reflected in the success of 5 of our 6 students in this cohort. 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. At the same time, we also elongated the timeline for the IDS 499 senior research project, leaving more time to edit and refine student work prior to presentation. Moving forward, we will continue 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

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 2024-25

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)

2.58

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Scores rose significantly in this outcome in 2023-4 but dropped again this year, probably due to the impact of one outlier in a 6 person cohort who failed to complete one of the assignments. With the outlier removed, the score would have been 2.81, an increase from last year. 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. Our sense is that students showed a strength with verbal communication skills, with two of them delivering exceptional final presentations that far exceeded our goals. In spite of the drop, we believe this to be a strength of the program.

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?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Students will demonstrate effective writing skills for professional communication.

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-25

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)

2.66

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

3

Comments/Narrative

We are delighted to have met this goal for the first time in three years, but also wary of unwarranted confidence considering the small size of our cohort. 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 and now to 2.66. We hope this trend reflects additional editing time created by changes in the IDS 499 timeline. However, the quality of rough drafts also improved this year, probably reflecting changes in the population mix for IDS students towards career-focused students and away from degree-completion students. This score reflects the writing instruction and feedback students received throughout their time at Lander and not just in their 6 hours of IDS classes. In general, we believe that Lander students would benefit from increased practice time and increased rigor in writing. We suspect that some of the increase in this score reflects that 1/3 of the cohort were Honors College members whose HONS courses include extensive writing and editing.

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.

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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

Academic Year 2024-25

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)

2.91

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

3

Comments/Narrative

Students continue to score well in this measurement and increased significantly from last year's score of 2.66. 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. Though our students consistently meet this goal, we will continue to measure its success over the next few years during a time of change in our student population. This year's increase seems linked to better performance in writing overall, which in turn reflects the skills of our smaller IDS cohort with fewer degree-completion students from College of Education. It may also reflect this cohort's greater motivation for selecting an IDS major.

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. 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. Historically, IDS students have performed better in verbal communication than in written communication. This year, those scores flipped. Though the drop in oral communication scores may have been a fluke within a small cohort, we noticed an improved quality in both written and final drafts of the IDS 499 portfolio that seem to reflect changes within the student population enrolled in IDS.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

In 2024-25, we continued to use the elongated timeline for the IDS 499 research project begun in 2023, allowing for more rehearsal of oral presentations and copy-editing of portfolio documents. Last year we decided to gather 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 also informally scored the rough drafts to better assess students' baseline performance without extensive coaching. That step allowed us to see that the quality of rough drafts improved similarly to the final drafts. Although we believe the improvement is most likely tied to changing student populations in the major, it may also reflect the increasing use of GenAI tools to assist in writing. As GenAI tools become more and more heavily used by students, we may need to reconsider our priorities for written communication within the major and the university as a whole. One of the two portfolio narratives is an educational autobiography, a personal reflection on students' educational journeys. In the grading of this class assignment in 2025-26, we will prioritize "authenticity" within the grading rubric. Based on trends observed in this current cohort, we may consider similar revisions within the scoring rubric used here to measure written communication.

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.