AOC Summary of Social Science Comprehensive Assessment Review

DRAFT (3/22/10)

On February 22, 2010, the Assessment Oversight Committee (AOC) conducted an assessment review of the Social Science Comprehensive major. David Rowley, a professor in the History program, presented the report. Rowley noted that the majority of social science comprehensive majors are also education majors. The primary assessment tool is the Praxis II Social Sciences Examination administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Rowley pointed out that the social science comprehensive major is a collection of disciplines. Each of those disciplines has developed standards for assessment, but there are no other separate assessment measures for the social science comprehensive major as such besides the Praxis II exam.

The AOC offered a number of suggestions to help improve the assessment of the social science comprehensive major. The Social Science department could make more use of the Praxis II exam. The department could also administer a survey to students who took the Praxis II test asking them to identify/describe areas in which they weak/strong etc. By analyzing sample Praxis II questions (if available) in conjunction with results from a student survey, the Social Science department could better identify what and how to improve. Another suggestion is for the education major to specifically integrate social science content within the portfolios it uses for its assessment. The Social Science department could also adopt the student learning outcomes from the social science component of general education in its assessment of the Social Science Comprehensive major.

These suggestions will be forwarded to the Chair of the Social Science department and the Dean of LA&E in order to improve the assessment of the Social Science Comprehensive major.