



College of Education and Affiliated Programs
Annual Report—Fall 2012
Social and Cultural Analysis of Education

Background

1. Describe your program (enrollment, number of faculty, general goals). Have there been any major changes since your last report?

Program Overview, Student Learning Outcomes, and Goals. The Social and Cultural Analysis of Education (SCA) program’s mission is to: “provide students with an intellectually rigorous interdisciplinary experience that emphasizes critical approaches to educational analysis. The Social and Cultural Analysis of Education program aims to prepare our graduates to envision and effect transformative practices in a broad range of educational contexts, both domestically and internationally.” The program incorporates study of K-12 and higher education, adult education, and community-based education at local, national, and international levels. The current SCA program, which took effect in Fall 2009, is a revised version of the former Social and Multicultural Foundations program, which had been offered for more than 15 years in the College. The program revision involved streamlining program requirements and developing core and capstone courses. Effective Fall 2011, one additional change was made to the SCA program through the College curriculum process: a specific course requirement for Advancement to Candidacy was removed in order to make the process more efficient.

Through core courses, regular advising appointments, program orientations, retreats and other events, the program offers candidates the opportunity to engage in an active teaching and learning community in order to grow and develop academically, professionally, and personally. The program’s core and capstone courses provide students with opportunities for reflection on academic, professional, and personal growth.

The Social and Cultural Analysis of Education program supports the mission of the College of Education. The program is aligned to all seven aspects of the College conceptual framework (effective pedagogy, evidence-based practices, collaboration, leadership, innovation, scholarship, and advocacy). Table 1 displays the SCAE program’s six developmental Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and indicates their alignment with specific aspects of the College conceptual framework.

All six SLOs are introduced in SCAE 550 (the core course all candidates take in the first semester of enrollment) and assessed in SCAE 551 (the second core course, offered during the second semester of candidates’ enrollment) and SCAE 695 (the capstone course, offered during candidates’ final year of enrollment). SLOs are assessed through signature assignments in SCAE 551 and 695. SLOs 1-4 are assessed in SCAE 551 through the Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Project and in SCAE 695 through the Theory into Practice Project. SLOs 5-6 are assessed in both SCAE 551 and SCAE 695 through the Assessment of Sophisticated Academic Writing rubric (SLO 5) and the Assessment of Engagement in Critical Dialogue rubric (SLO 6).

Table 1*Program Student Learning Outcomes and Relevant Standards*

	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6
SLOs	Synthesize concepts and ideas in the area of social and cultural analysis of education.	Identify implications of social and cultural theories for educational practice in a variety of settings.	Formulate strategies for effecting social and educational justice.	Construct complex written arguments related to social and cultural issues in education.	Produce sophisticated academic writing related to the social and cultural analysis of education.	Engage in critical dialogue related to educational policies, practices, and pedagogies.
Signature Assignment(s)	Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Project (SCAE 551); Theory into practice Project (SCAE 695)	Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Project (SCAE 551); Theory into practice Project (SCAE 695)	Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Project (SCAE 551); Theory into practice Project (SCAE 695)	Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Project (SCAE 551); Theory into practice Project (SCAE 695)	Assessment of Sophisticated Academic Writing	Assessment of Engagement in Critical Dialogue
Conceptual Framework	Effective pedagogy, evidence-based practices	Collaboration, innovation	Advocacy, evidence-based practices, innovation	Scholarship, leadership	Scholarship, effective pedagogy	Leadership, advocacy, innovation

In addition to the Student Learning Outcomes displayed in Table 1, the program has five goals: 1) Graduates understand how social and cultural forces impact, and are impacted by, educational policies, practices, and pedagogies; 2) Graduates have a critical understanding of the role of education in society--locally, nationally and globally; 3) Graduates have a critical understanding of historical and contemporary struggles for social and educational justice in the United States and around the world; 4) Graduates are committed to envisioning and effecting transformative practices in a variety of educational contexts; 5) Graduates value professional and intellectual growth and development as integral to exercising agency in their spheres of influence.

Candidate Information. As displayed in Table 2 below, 21 students matriculated into the SCA program in Fall 2011. In addition, 1 thesis and 17 comprehensive exam candidates had advanced to the culminating experience as of Fall 2011 (see Table 3 below). Table 4 demonstrates that 17 students passed the comprehensive examination in Spring 2012, which put them on target to graduate. Table 5 indicates that 19 students successfully transitioned to the exit point of the program by Summer 2012.

Table 2

Program Specific Candidate Information, 2011-2012 (snapshot taken Su12) – Transition Point 1 (Admission to Program)

	Number Applied	Number Accepted	Number Matriculated
TOTAL	37	35	21

Table 3

Program Specific Candidate Information, 2011-2012 (snapshot taken Su12) – Transition Point 2 (Advancement to Culminating Experience)

	Number
Thesis (698)¹	1
Comps²	17

Table 4

Comprehensive Exam Results, 2011-2012 (snapshot taken Su12)

	Number
Passed	17
Failed	1
Total³	18

Table 5

Program Specific Candidate Information, 2011-2012 (snapshot taken Su12) – Transition Point 3 (Exit)

	Number
Degree	19

¹ This is data on students who were enrolled in thesis work during Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. This figure may include students who actually “crossed into” this transition point prior to Fall 2011 and were still making progress on their theses at this time.

² This is data on the number of students who *applied* to take the comprehensive examination in Summer 2011, Fall 2011, or Spring 2012. The data include students who may not have taken or passed the examination(s).

³ The number of pass + fail does not equal the number of students who advanced to take the comps (Table 3) because some students who have registered for the exam do not attempt it. This data reflects number of attempts at one or more parts of the comprehensive exam in Summer 2011, Fall 2011, or Spring 2012. Individuals who failed all or part of the exam and chose to retake it during AY 11-12 may be accounted for twice.

Program Faculty. During the 2011-12 academic year, the SCA program had two full-time faculty members (see Table 6): Dr. Laura Portnoi, who is a tenured Associate Professor and serves as the Program Coordinator; and Dr. Lindsay Pérez Huber, who was hired on a one-year contract for 2011-12 as Visiting Faculty. Dr. Pérez Huber was hired to serve as the second full-time faculty member with a primary responsibility for urban contexts courses after Dr. Michael Dumas left the university at the conclusion of the 2010-11 academic year. A full national search for a tenure-track faculty member took place in 2011-12, and Dr. Pérez Huber was hired as an assistant professor, effective Fall 2012. Thus, the program currently has one full-time tenured Associate Professor and one full-time tenure track Assistant Professor for the 2012-13 academic year. For the 2011-12 academic year, the program had one part-time faculty member, as noted in Table 6; he taught one international contexts course in Spring 2012 while Dr. Portnoi was on sabbatical.

Table 6

Faculty Profile 2011-12⁴

Status	Number
Full-time TT	1
Full-time Visiting Faculty	1
Part-time Faculty	1
Total:	3

2. How many of the total full- and part-time faculty in the program reviewed and discussed the assessment findings described in this document? Please attach minutes and/or completed worksheets/artifacts to document this meeting.

Both current full-time faculty members (Dr. Portnoi and Dr. Pérez Huber) participated in the data discussion on November 26, 2012 regarding the assessment findings described in this document. Minutes of the meeting are located in the appendix.

Data

3. Question 3 is in 2 parts focused on primary data sources related to: student learning and program effectiveness/student experience:
 - a. Candidate Performance Data: Provide *direct* evidence for the student learning outcomes assessed this year and describe how they were assessed (the tools, assignments, etc. used). Describe the process used for collection and analysis. Present descriptive statistics such as the range, median, mean, percentage passing as appropriate for each outcome.

⁴ Faculty numbers reflect headcounts of any faculty member teaching a course in the program for the prior academic year (Summer through Spring). Faculty who teach across multiple programs will be counted in each program.

Program Student Learning Outcomes and Signature Assignments. SLOs 1-6 were assessed in the 2011-12 academic year through signature assignments, detailed in Table 7 below, in SCAE 551 (Spring 2012) and SCAE 695 (Fall 2011).

Table 7
Program Student Learning Outcomes and Signature Assignments

Student Learning Outcomes	Student Learning Outcomes Description	Signature Assignment(s)
<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Synthesize concepts and ideas in the area of social and cultural analysis of education.</p> <p>Identify implications of social and cultural theories for educational practice in a variety of settings.</p> <p>Formulate strategies for effecting social and educational justice.</p> <p>Construct complex written arguments related to social and cultural issues in education.</p>	<p>SCAE 551: Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Proposal In the proposal, candidates begin to apply theories and constructs they have been studying in both core classes (SCAE 550 and SCAE 551) to educational practice. In SCAE 550, candidates complete an Annotated Bibliography on a topic related to education and variables of social difference. With the Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Proposal, candidates use this bibliography as a foundation to develop a plan for a specific pedagogical intervention aimed at effecting social and educational justice. The proposal includes: contextual framing, an assessment of the “problem,” and development of a curricular or pedagogical intervention designed to address the problem.</p> <p>SCAE 695: Theory into Practice Project In the capstone course (SCAE 695), candidates reflect on the empirical and theoretical knowledge base they have developed throughout the program. In the Theory into Practice Project, candidates use the theories and constructs they have studied to offer an analysis of a specific environment, conflict, dilemma, or phenomenon. The significance of the project is that candidates are expected to demonstrate a deep understanding of the context, create complex strategies relevant to specific sites of educational practice, and consider implications for researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and community stakeholders.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Produce sophisticated academic writing related to the social and cultural analysis of education.</p>	<p>SCAE 551 and 695: Assessment of Sophisticated Academic Writing The Sophisticated Academic Writing Rubric and faculty expectations for sophisticated academic writing are introduced in the program’s first core course, SCAE 550. The rubric is used to assess candidates’ academic writing on one assignment in SCAE 551 (the second core class) and SCAE 695 (the capstone course)—the Praxis in Critical Pedagogy Proposal and the Theory into Practice Project, respectively.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Engage in critical dialogue related to educational policies, practices, and pedagogies.</p>	<p>SCAE 551 and SCAE 695: Assessment of Engagement in Critical Dialogue Critical dialogue is an essential component of each course in the SCAE program. Candidates are introduced to the concepts of critical dialogue and the</p>

		<p>rubric through which they will be assessed in the first core class, SCAE 550. Candidates are asked to critically reflect on their own engagement in dialogue at the conclusion of the SCAE 550 course, a process that will continue in each course throughout the program. Critical dialogue is a specific content-area focus in SCAE 551, and candidates study tenets of critical dialogue throughout the course. Candidates are reminded of the expectations contained in the rubric at the beginning of SCAE 551. At the conclusion of SCAE 551 and 695, candidates submit an Assessment of Engagement in Critical Dialogue, in which they reflect on their own dialogical practice and rate themselves based on the rubric. The instructor then grades the candidates' reflective assessments.</p>
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Data Collection and Analysis Process. The College Assessment Office facilitated data collection and analysis for program SLO data. Using established rubrics, program faculty recorded assessment data for signature the assignments (detailed in Table 7) in SCAE 551 and SCAE 695. These raw data were supplied to the Assessment Office via an Excel spreadsheet, which the Assessment Office used to generate figures for the program's data discussion that took place in November 2012.

Presentation of Data. Figures 1-5 below display assessment data collected for the signature assignments described in Table 7 that are administered in SCAE 551 and SCAE 695. Figures 1 and 2 display aggregate assessment data across both SCAE 551 and SCAE 695 courses. Figures 3, 4, and 5 display the score distribution for SLOs 1-6; results for SCAE 551 and 695 are separated out, allowing for a more detailed review of findings related to the program's developmental SLOs.

Figure 1
AY11-12 SLO Comparison

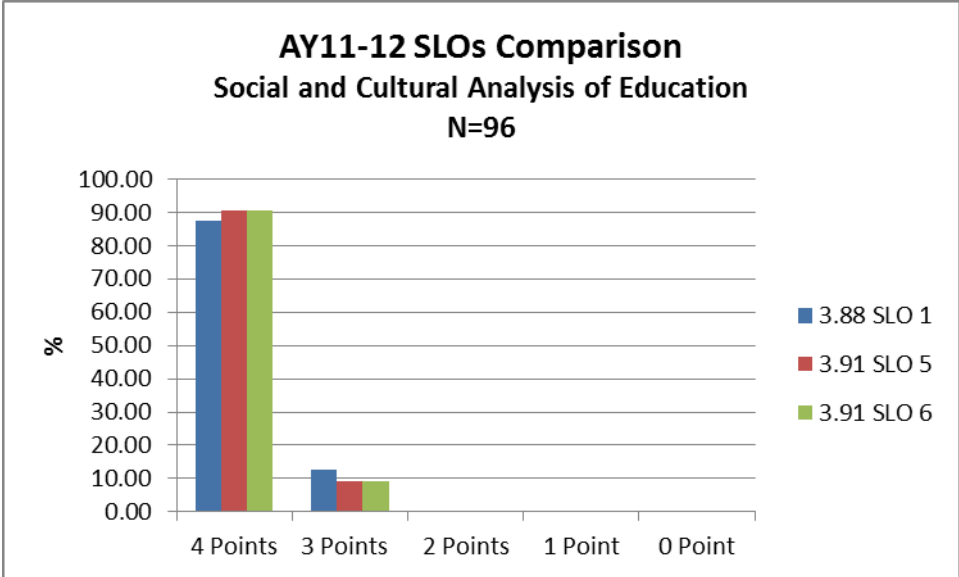
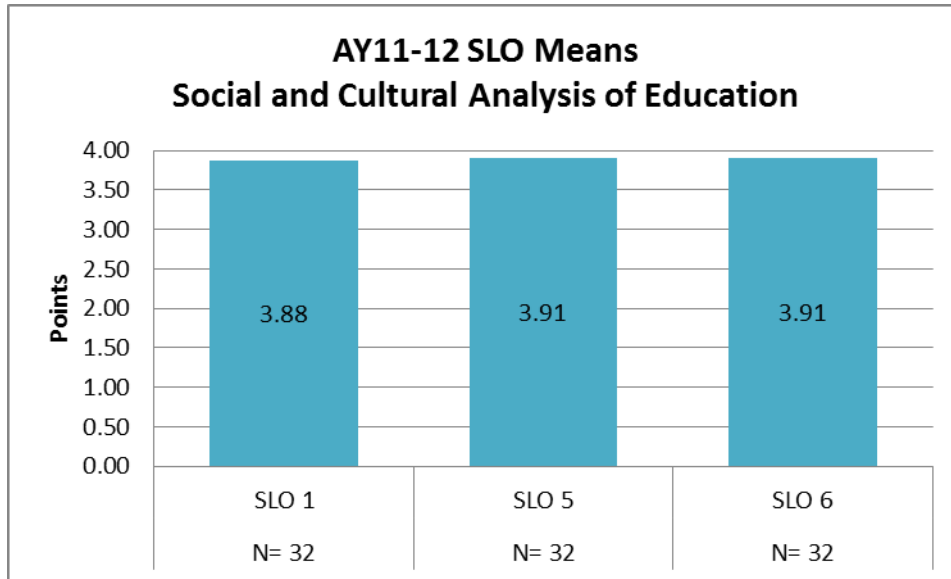


Figure 2
 AY11-12 SLO Means



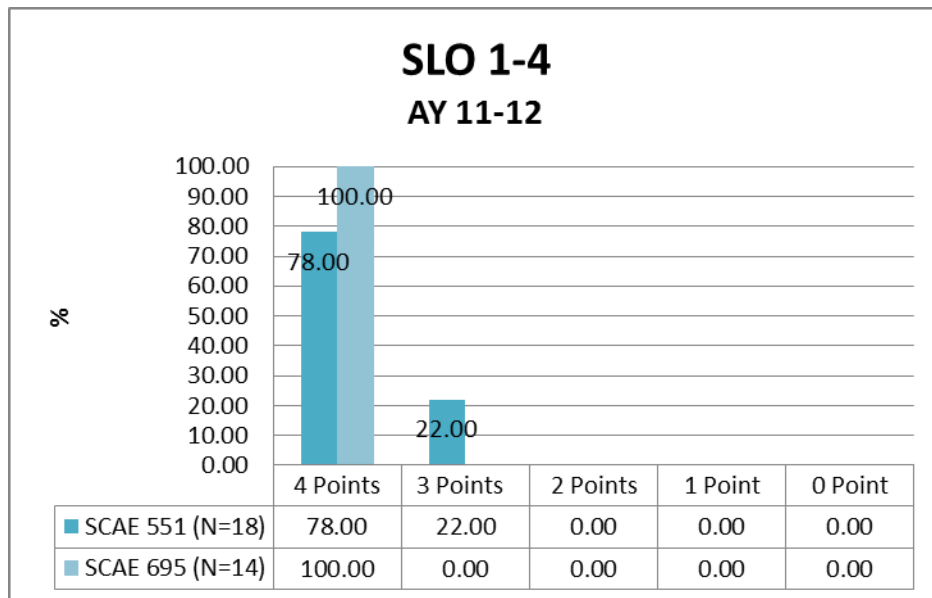
Outcome 1: Synthesize concepts and ideas in the area of social and cultural analysis of education.

Outcome 2: Identify implications of social and cultural theories for educational practice in a variety of settings.

Outcome 3: Formulate strategies for effecting social and educational justice.

Outcome 4: Construct complex written arguments related to social and cultural issues in education.

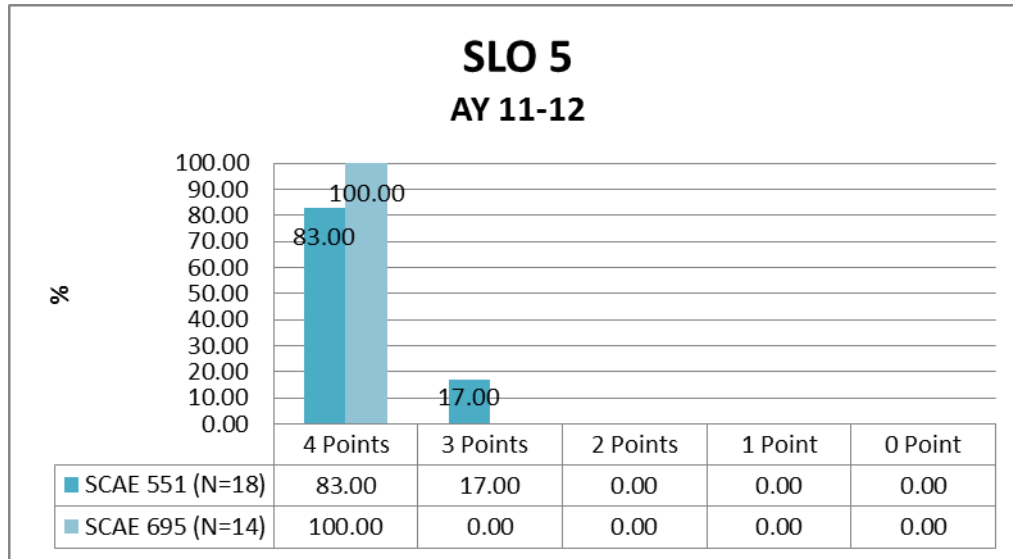
Figure 3
 AY11-12 Score Distribution-SLO 1-4



Outcome 5: Produce sophisticated academic writing related to the social and cultural analysis of education.

Figure 4

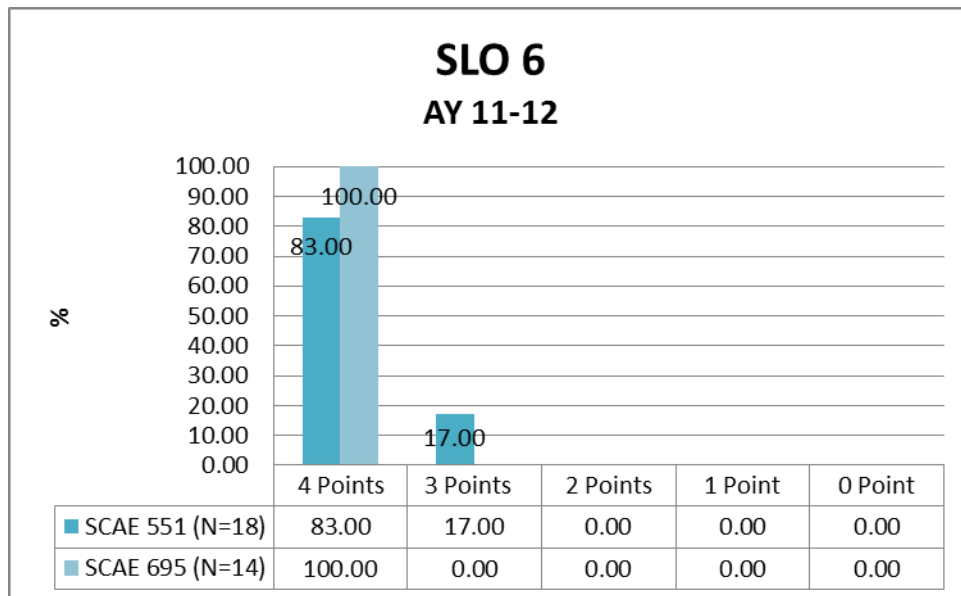
AY11-12 Score Distribution-SLO 5



Outcome 6: Engage in critical dialogue related to educational policies, practices, and pedagogies.

Figure 5

AY11-12 Score Distribution-SLO 6



- b. Program Effectiveness Data: What data were collected to determine program effectiveness and how (e.g., post-program surveys, employer feedback, focus groups, retention data)? This may be indirect evidence of student learning, satisfaction data, or other indicators of program effectiveness. Describe the process used for collection and analysis. Present descriptive statistics such as the range, median, mean, or summarized qualitative data, for each outcome.

Program effectiveness data for the 2011-12 academic year were collected through two main sources: an exit survey and focus groups, both of which were facilitated by the College's Assessment Office. In addition, the program faculty administered a short survey in Fall 2011 regarding the offering days and times for core and capstone courses (SCAE 550, 551, and 695).

Exit Survey. The Assessment Office administers an annual exit survey via SurveyMonkey to candidates who are graduating from the program. The exit survey contains a number of standard questions across all programs in the College; for the 2011-12 survey, the standard questions changed a great deal, given that the College had started using a new vision, mission, and conceptual framework in the intervening months. In addition, the SCA program faculty have added three Likert-type scale and two open-ended questions to the exit survey. The Assessment Office provides descriptive statistics for each of the survey items; a summary of the findings from this survey is presented below.

Overview of Exit Survey Findings. 9 candidates responded to the exit survey, 55.6.3% of whom were male, and 33.3% of whom were female. 88.9% of the respondents completed the program in 2-3 calendar years. Six of the respondents indicated that they completed the program in Spring 2012, while three had completed the program in Fall 2011. Those students who completed the program in Fall 2011 did so with a special administration of the comprehensive examination (which is normally offered in Spring only); these students originally planned to do a thesis and changed their plans, largely due to the departure of their thesis advisor, who left the university at the conclusion of the 2010-11 academic year. Given that many of the questions in the general exit survey (the questions are designed by the College so that students from all programs answer) pertain to professional preparation and are therefore not directly relevant to the SCA program, which focuses on analysis of the contexts surrounding education rather than professional preparation for a specific career, this overview focuses on program-specific questions. 100% of the survey respondents selected "a great deal" for two items in question on how the program has developed students' understanding of: 1) social and cultural theories related to education, 2) the complex relationship between education and society. For the third item—educational inequalities and injustices at the local, national, and global levels—eight respondents selected "a great deal" while one respondent selected "somewhat." For the fourth item—critical pedagogy aimed at alleviating these inequalities—seven respondents selected "a great deal" while two selected "somewhat." Table 8 below displays candidates' responses regarding the question related to program SLOs and Table 9 displays responses related to academic, professional, and personal growth.

Table 8

Responses to Question: "To what degree has the SCA program developed your ability to perform the following tasks:"

	A great deal	Somewhat	Not at all
Synthesize concepts and ideas related to social and cultural analysis of education	88.9% (8)	11.1% (1)	0% (0)
Identify implications of social and cultural theories for educational practice	100% (9)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Formulate strategies for effecting social and educational justice	66.7% (6)	22.2% (2)	11.1% (1)
Construct complex written arguments	88.9% (8)	11.1% (1)	0% (0)
Produce sophisticated academic writing	88.9% (8)	11.1% (1)	0% (0)
Engage in critical dialogue	88.9% (8)	11.1% (1)	0% (0)

Table 9

Responses to Question: "Please indicate your agreement with the following statements:"

	SA	A	D	SD
My SCAE program courses have been intellectually rigorous	66.7% (6)	33.3% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)
My SCAE courses have challenged me to grow and develop academically	77.8 (7)	11.1% (1)	11.1% (0)	0% (0)
My SCAE courses have challenged me to grow and develop professionally	77.8% (7)	22.2% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
My SCAE courses have challenged me to grow and develop personally	100% (9)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Focus Groups. Program faculty sought the assistance of the Assessment Office to conduct focus groups on SCAE 695 (which had been altered after focus groups were held in Fall 2010) and the program's Critical Reading Worksheet (CRW). Based on student course feedback in Fall 2010 and Fall 2011 for SCAE 695 and from several courses and semesters for the Critical Reading Worksheets, students wanted to see changes to both the SCAE 695 course and the CRWs. The Assessment Office coordinated the focus groups after consulting with program faculty and jointly devising focus group protocols. Two faculty members from other master's programs conducted the focus group meetings at the conclusion of Fall 2011. Each focus group meeting consisted of two parts—the first part involved discussing the CRWs with half of the students enrolled in SCAE 550 (the second faculty member met with the other half of the students simultaneously); the second part involved discussing both the CRWs and the SCAE 695 capstone course with half of the students who were about to complete the SCAE 695 course (the second faculty member met with the other half of the students simultaneously).

Overview of Focus Group Findings. For the *Critical Reading Worksheets*, students in the SCAE 695 capstone course found them more valuable than students in the SCAE 550 course (new students in the program). Overall, SCAE 695 students indicated that the CRWs should be kept as a staple in the program,

but that they should be altered to be more effective. Some SCAE 550 students also thought that the CRWs could be more useful to them if they were altered in some way. Much of the focus group time focused on ways to alter the CRWs in order to improve them. Students suggested that a different format should be used to allow them to more quickly fill out the sheets. Students also suggested that the CRWs should be more reflective, rather than based on summary information. In addition, students sought to change the submission process: Overall, they did not feel that it was necessary in a graduate-level course for faculty to collect the CRWs. Collecting the CRWs at the beginning of class, as was the practice at the time, was also problematic because students had to bring two copies of the CRWs with them and also could not add to the CRWs easily during the class session (at least not to the copy the instructor collected). The findings from this part of the focus groups indicated that students, especially those in SCAE 550, did not fully recognize the purpose of the CRWs, which was to foster engagement in critical dialogue regarding the texts students had read; instead, students often saw the CRW as “busy work.” For the SCAE 695 course, students indicated that they appreciated the instructor’s attempts to have the course be co-constructed and many of the discussions be student-led (based on feedback from the Fall 2010 focus groups). They acknowledged, however, that they did not challenge themselves and each other fully and questioned whether faculty involvement should be greater in providing the structure to ensure a better experience. Their responses also indicated that they had very different kinds of interests and needs regarding reading materials in a capstone course. Moreover, several students indicated that they would like to see greater variety in the types of assignments offered. In addition, they indicated that they would like to have a greater focus on current events and alternative perspectives in the course.

Survey on Core/Capstone Course Offering Times/Days. For several years, core and capstone classes had been offered on Thursdays. In Fall Semester, one faculty member had been teaching the SCAE 550 foundations course from 4-6:45 pm followed directly by the SCAE 695 capstone course for a number of years. Students in SCAE 695 had indicated that the 7 pm course time was too late for them, given that they work at jobs that require them to rise early. The SCA program faculty therefore sought to ascertain whether Thursday nights are indeed the best night for most students for the core and capstone courses (SCAE 551 is offered on Thursdays in Spring Semester). And, if the same faculty member had to teach the SCAE 550 and 695 courses, the faculty wondered whether another night would be preferable to Thursdays rather than having SCAE 695 begin at 7 pm. They administered a mini-survey through SurveyMonkey at the conclusion of Fall 2011 to better understand the students’ preferences.

Overview of Course Offering Survey Findings. 32 students responded to the survey. 53.1% of the respondents indicated that Thursday is their preferred day for SCAE 550, 551, and 695, while 18.8% indicated that Monday, 18.8% indicated that Tuesday, and 9.4% indicated that Wednesday would be their preferred days. In addition, students indicated that the following days of the week would *not* work for their schedules for the required core/capstone courses: Monday (60%), Tuesday (40%), and Wednesday (30%). If the same faculty member needed to teach SCAE 550 and 695, 47.1% of students responded that they would prefer to keep SCAE 695 at 7 pm, even if on another day, while 38.2% suggested that the course should be offered on any Monday-Thursday slot at 4 pm (14.7% indicated that the course should be offered simultaneously with SCAE 561, which is offered in both fall and spring semesters). When asked which day they would like to have SCAE 695 offered, if it had to be offered at 7 pm, 42.4% responded “Thursday.”

4. OPTIONAL: You may provide *additional* information (e.g., other data, copies of letters of support from granting agencies or school staff, etc.) about candidate performance, the student experience or program effectiveness used to inform programmatic decision making. This may include quantitative and qualitative data sources.

Analysis and Actions

5. What do the data for each outcome say regarding candidate performance and program effectiveness? Please note particular areas of strength or in need of improvement.

The aggregated signature assignment assessment data for all six Student Learning Outcomes indicate that SCA candidates are performing well for each of the six SLOs. As depicted in Figures 1 and 2, the scores for all SLOs are high, in the 3.8 range and above. The disaggregated data (Figures 3-5) demonstrate that candidate scores are higher in SCAE 695 as compared to SCAE 551; this effect is desirable and expected, given the developmental nature of the SCA program SLOs. The data suggest that candidates improve in their performance on the SLOs as they progress through the program, and demonstrate mastery of the SLOs at the conclusion of the program. The findings from the signature assignment data were corroborated by candidates' own assessment of their learning in the exit survey, as well as by the focus group data. As depicted in Table 9, candidates who completed the exit survey indicated the program has helped them develop the ability to achieve each of the program's student learning outcomes, with the majority of the respondents indicating "a great deal" for all program SLOs. Data from the focus groups were beneficial for changing the SCAE 695 syllabus and practices related to the Critical Reading Worksheets. Taken as a whole, the data suggest that the revised SCAE program's strengths are:

- 1) the way SLOs are introduced and then built upon and mastered throughout the program;
- 2) the intellectual rigor of the program;
- 3) the emphasis on academic writing;
- 4) the emphasis on analysis and synthesis related to social and cultural theories and concepts;
- 5) the opportunities the program provides for academic, professional, and personal growth and reflection upon growth and development;
- 6) the strong support the program provides, especially through the core courses and through student advising and faculty-student interactions.

Although the data provide positive feedback regarding the program overall, the data indicate areas where improvement would be desirable:

- 1) Although SCA is not a professional preparation program per se, program faculty could help students make greater connections to their professional realms;
- 2) The emphasis on connections between theory and practice more generally could be increased;
- 3) The SCAE 695 course could be revised to allow more individualized readings and assignments;
- 4) The Critical Reading Worksheets could be revised and students could be reminded of the purpose of the worksheets.

6. How do these findings compare to past assessment findings?

Findings for the program Student Learning Outcomes are consistent with findings from the 2010-11 academic year, and even indicate a slight improvement over last academic year's findings. Findings from the exit survey differ somewhat from previous years, in that more respondents indicated that there is a greater need for theory to practice connections. In addition, this year, one person responded "disagree" to the question about whether the program has helped the student grow academically, whereas all students have indicated "agree" or "strongly agree" in the past. Although the faculty are concerned about students responding to questions such as this in a negative manner, we are cognizant that only one student responded this way. Therefore, program faculty will continue to watch these results over time to ascertain whether there is a pattern or whether this year was an outlier, particularly given that students who responded to the survey were studying at a time of faculty transition in the program. In addition, the new set of questions that the College uses for all students in all programs will need to be reviewed over time, given that we do not have existing data for comparison.

7. What steps, if any, will be taken with regard to curriculum, programs, practices, assessment processes, etc. based on these findings in Questions 5 and 6? Please link proposed changes to data discussed in Q5.

Program faculty have already completed two of the action items listed in Table 10 below. We met several times in Summer 2012 to review focus group data from Fall 2011, in order to be able to implement changes as of the Fall 2012 semester. Pursuant to action items listed in the 2010-11 annual report, faculty members also sought to explore ideas for co-teaching and to check the alignment of the SCAE 550, 551, and 695 courses. Several changes were made based on these discussions. First, arrangements had been made for each of the two faculty members to teach either SCAE 550 or SCAE 695 in Fall 2012. This arrangement allows the program to keep both classes on Thursday evenings and to offer them at 4 pm simultaneously, given that Thursdays remain the best day to offer required core/capstone courses based on the survey conducted in Fall 2011. Having these courses run simultaneously offers opportunities for co-teaching and interaction between the two groups of students; during Fall 2012, the groups have met together to work on mindmaps related to social and cultural theories, for poster sessions, and for joint reflection discussions on applying social and cultural theories to educational issues. At the Summer 2012 meetings, program faculty also discussed the SCAE 550, 551, and 695 courses and reviewed the syllabi. We found that the courses do align well, and made some small adjustments, particularly to ensure that the assignments build on each other and that no readings are repeated unnecessarily in the courses. In addition, based on the Fall 2011 focus group feedback, we revised the Critical Reading Worksheet into a new version, called the "Critical Reflection Log." This log focuses to a much greater degree on reflection (especially on connections to students' professional practice, based on the exit survey findings and focus groups), and we added a section with the purpose and instructions to the log to remind students why we require that the log be completed prior to each class meeting (to go beyond summary to prepare them for engaging in critical dialogue with classmates). We also added questions to each of three sections within the CRL to help students get the most out of the logs and changed our policy to indicate that the logs do not need to be submitted to the instructors. Finally, we made considerable changes to SCAE 695, including: 1) adding student-led discussions of current events that are based on brief alternative perspective readings found in popular media; 2) aside from a few key readings that all students complete, allowing students to choose a reading list of books for the course relevant to their particular areas of interest, and 3) adding alternatives for the Theory into Practice project that allow for individualized projects that are applied,

theoretical, and/or research-based, rather than focusing solely on existing literature. Changes to the assignments allow students to pursue options that connect theory to practice more fully.

Table 10

Action Plan

Priority	Action or Proposed Changes To Be Made	By Whom?	By When?
High	Revise SCAE 695 course based on suggestions from focus groups and exit survey data regarding theory to practice connections	SCA faculty	Completed, Summer 2012
High	Revise Critical Reading Worksheets based on feedback from focus groups and exit survey data regarding theory to practice connections	SCA faculty	Completed, Summer 2012
High	Review SCA Academic Policies document to improve policies that decrease late assignments; reconsider and refine revise/resubmit process	SCA faculty	Summer 2013
Medium	Develop a faculty/student outreach and recruitment committee	SCA faculty and student committee	Spring 2013
Medium	Review student end-of-semester feedback for SCAE 550, 551 and 695 to continue to align content and assignments for core/capstone courses	SCA faculty	Summer 2013
Medium	Review assignments in SCAE 560, 561, 562 for alignment with SDHE SLO on diversity	SCA faculty in consultation with SDHE coordinator	Fall 2013
Low	Investigate spring retreat or other such programmatic opportunities to get full group of students together (depending on funding and student commitment to get involved)	Program faculty with student support	TBD

APPENDIX
Minutes
Social and Cultural Analysis of Education Program Data Discussion
11/26/12, 12 – 2 pm
ED1-59
Faculty Present: Laura Portnoi (Program Coordinator), Lindsay Pérez Huber

Faculty reviewed **aggregated 1-6 SLO data charts provided by the Assessment Office**; overall the data do not seem to indicate any major problematic areas. All scores are in the 3.5 range or above.

The aggregated data, while useful in a broad sense, is not as beneficial as data separated out by course or semester, given that the data are collected in SCAE 551 (early in the program) and SCAE 695 (toward the end of the program) and that the program SLOs are developmental. We would expect that students would perform better for each SLO in SCAE 695 than in SCAE 551, and the aggregated data do not address this development over time.

We **focused on SLOs 1, 5, and 6**, for which we had data available **disaggregated by course**. Although the same individuals are not necessarily assessed in SCAE 551 and SCAE 695, the higher scores for SCAE 695 courses indicate that candidates are performing better on SLOs 1, 5, and 6 over time. This improvement is desirable given that the SLOs are introduced in SCAE 550, focused on in SCAE 551, and assessed again in SCAE 551 for mastery. For example, we find that the lower levels of academic writing ability in SCAE 551 are not problematic for first-year graduate students, as they are still rather high and do improve over time. The data were similar for SLO 6; candidates performed better in SCAE 695 than in SCAE 551. This finding is to be expected, given that many students may be new to engaging in dialogue when they begin the program. Students engage in critical dialogue in all SCAE classes, and therefore have weekly opportunities to grow and develop in this area. By the time they reach SCAE 695, it would be expected that they are performing even better in this area than in SCAE 551, which is borne out by the data.

Faculty also discussed the results of the **alumni/exit survey**. Our conversations about the survey were limited given that the number of respondents was only 9, and 3 of these respondents graduated in Fall 2011, not Spring 2012. Those who graduated in Fall 2011 were students who had planned to do a thesis and did not complete the work, largely due to the departure of their thesis chair, who left the university in Spring 2011. These students were allowed to take a special administration of the comprehensive exam in Fall 2011 so that they could graduate sooner (we normally offer the exam in spring only). Despite the limited number of respondents, we were pleased that the majority indicated that the program improved their ability to perform all six of the program SLOs. The responses to Questions 3 and 4 indicate that students would like more connection of theory to practice. We discussed that this practical experience would be desirable, but that it is not feasible from a logistical/programmatic perspective given the wide variety of careers and interests that our graduates pursue. Moreover, we are concerned about authenticity. We do not feel that it is ethical to require students to get involved in effecting change in communities or in workplaces as part of a class assignment if they are not intending to continue with this work. In other words, we encourage those who get involved to do so authentically. For Question 4, one person stated “not at all” for “formulate strategies for effecting social and educational justice,” which raises a concern for us. We also noticed that graduates’ views on advising seemed to be varied; this is perhaps not surprising given the change in faculty that occurred during the respondents’ time in the program. We will continue to watch the responses to these questions carefully over time, especially focusing on 2013-14 and beyond, when we’ll have respondents who entered the

program after the transition occurred. For the college-wide section of the survey, many of the questions in this new version of the exit survey (reflecting the college's new vision and mission) are not formulated in a way that is directly relevant to our program because we do not focus on professional preparation and standards. We wondered how some of our candidates, who may be full-time students or come from professional environments outside of education, might perceive some of the questions related to professional preparation in education. For our students, the appropriate response may not be as straightforward as for others and our students might interpret the questions differently. Similarly, we noticed that the questions on technology yielded mixed results, and graduates commented in the open-ended responses that technology is not as relevant to our program as others given that we focus on in-person group dialogue to a large degree. We will be interested to watch the responses to the college-wide questions over time. We also acknowledged that some graduates would like to have a wider variety of faculty present in the program, though it is difficult to address this given the campus budget and restricted size of the program.

We also discussed the **focus groups** that the Assessment Office facilitated at the conclusion of Fall 2011 regarding the Critical Reading Worksheet (CRW) and SCAE 695. We had previously discussed these results in Summer 2012 and made changes to the capstone course for Fall 2012 as a result of these discussions, such as adding an applied project option and individualized readings. We also created a new version of the CRW, called a Critical Reflection Log (CRL) and adjusted our policies on submitting the logs for Fall 2012. Faculty agreed that changes to SCAE 695 and the CRLs appear to be received positively. If any concerns arise in our Fall 2012 semester course feedback, we will reassess our practices with the CRL and consider revising SCAE 695 further. Because SCAE 550, 551, and 695 are linked, we need to carefully plan any changes through working together to ensure smooth transitions between the courses.

Finally, we discussed our experiences with the program and students recently. We focused mainly on late assignments. We have both noticed that students are increasingly asking for extensions for assignments and/or assuming it is acceptable to submit late assignments. Our revise and resubmit/mastery grading policy is perhaps connected to this problem. Students know that they have more time to work on their assignments further, and some take advantage of this, while most students use the mastery system as an opportunity to grow and develop their writing skills.

Goals for Future:

Medium Term

- Given the challenges we have had with multiple students submitting late assignments in the past few semesters, we should investigate ways to strengthen our policies regarding late assignments. We may need to discuss professionalism with our new students more regularly and earlier in the program. We also need to address the revise/resubmit process for mastery grading in light of the late assignment issue.
- We would like to broaden our recruitment efforts by enlisting the support of current students. Recruitment for our program is challenging, as our students come from and will go on to a range of different professions. We would like to find ways to attract a broader range of students, and expect that our current students will be able to assist in this regard.
- Anecdotally, we feel that the alignment work we did last summer on SCAE 550, 551, and 695 has improved the alignment of these courses. We plan to review our student feedback (the formal university evaluations as well as the additional feedback sheets that we administer) from the

2012-13 academic year next summer to ascertain whether there are any areas that we should address to further align the courses.

- Now that we have a full-time, tenure-track faculty member teaching the urban contexts courses, we met with the Student Development in Higher Education program coordinator in Fall 2012 to discuss ensuring that we coordinate the assignments in SCAE 560, 561, and 562 that SDHE students take as an elective and which align to SDHE's SLO on diversity in order to ensure that they are relevant to the SLO being assessed. This alignment had previously been done with the instructor who taught those courses and who subsequently left the university at the conclusion of Spring 2011.

Long Term

- Based on prior focus group findings (from Fall 2010), we would like to integrate more opportunities, such as a spring retreat, that have both instructors and all students involved. Such events would need some funding, as well as student involvement and commitment in order to be feasible. For now, offering additional programmatic activities will remain a longer-term goal, but it is one we would like to keep on our list so that we continue to come back to it as a possibility.