STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROGRAM: Interior Design Master of Arts
SUBMITTED BY: Thea Scott-Fundling
DATE: 09/30/2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program description from the Course Catalog
The M. Wilhelmina Boldt Interior Design Program offers two tracks leading to a Master of Arts in interior design. The post-professional track is for those with an accredited undergraduate degree in interior design or architecture. The first professional track is for those with a baccalaureate degree not in interior design or architecture. The Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) reaccredited the Masters of Arts program in Interior Design in 2011. The first-professional MA program has been CIDA (Council for Interior Design Accreditation) since 2005. CIDA accredits only first-professional programs.

The graduate program abides by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) guidelines and standards with these specific objectives:
• to cultivate intellectual growth, independent learning, and competency in design practice, education, and research
• to develop proficiency in a specific aspect of the profession of interior design
• to advance the knowledge, skills, and techniques necessary for the competent practice of interior design
• to create a framework of inquiry and analysis to increase the body of knowledge in the field
• to create design solutions that meet specific client and end-user needs

List all of the program’s learning outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Year of Assessment</th>
<th>Assessment This Year</th>
<th>Year of Next Planned Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply all aspects of the design process to identify and explore design problems and generate creative solutions that enhance the human experience in interior environments;</td>
<td>New Outcome applied academic year 2015-2016</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply color principles and theories with regard to the functional, behavioral, aesthetic, and/or cultural needs of users of interior environments and in aspects of visual communication;</td>
<td>Outcome applied academic year 2015-2016</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of building systems and interior construction systems on design solutions; | Outcome applied academic year 2015-2016 | Yes | 2017

Understand and apply laws, codes, standards, and guidelines that affect the design of interior spaces, particularly through fire detection and suppression | Outcome applied academic year 2015-2016 | Yes | 2017

Describe how the program’s outcomes support Marymount’s mission, strategic plan, and relevant school plan:
The Interior Design MA Programs’ main mission is to prepare students to be entry level designers in the field of interior design. Our learning outcomes both support and are in line with CIDA’S accreditation criteria and with the National Council for Interior Design Qualifications (NCIDQ) areas of knowledge for qualifying candidacy to register for and take the professional exam certifying interior designers. Many of our students take the exam after school with two to three years of work experience in the field. We prepare them for eligibility upon graduation to enter working in the field of interior design. We uphold the university mission, strategic plan and school plan of Arts and Sciences, that foster intellectual curiosity and promotes career preparation. The curriculum both develops and builds on knowledge and skills that enable students to effectively solve design problems in various practice areas in Interior Design (retail, work places, healthcare) and through independently developed evidence-based design thesis projects completed in the two semesters of capstone classes. Studio courses focus on independent inquiry and critical thinking, and lecture classes teach students to be ethical and responsible designers as defined by the CIDA standards.

Provide a brief description of the assessment process used including strengths, challenges and planned improvements and provide evidence of the existence of a culture of continuous improvement based on assessment:
The 2016 SLO Assessment includes a lower level (ID 605) interior design studio (2nd year, 1st semester) and thesis (3rd year, 2nd semester capstone).

ID605 Graduate Practice Studio I, is the first graduate studio (2nd year; 1st semester) and focuses on development of comprehensive design solutions for the practice areas of commerce and entertainment, including retail and hospitality. Observation and/or behavior mapping studies, literature reviews, innovative design concepts, and brand identity are used to create evidence-based design solutions that emphasize creativity, principles of sustainability, way finding, and security.

ID699 Thesis or Design Research Project II, is the 2nd semester capstone design research studio of the both first-and post-professional programs and is where students work individually on research projects incorporating evidence collected and analyzed in Thesis I (ID698). Student projects are self identified, researched, and developed under faculty supervision. Project practice areas often include healthcare, education, office planning, retail and hospitality. There was one section of ID699 taught during the assessment year.
In both ID605 and ID699, the faculty teaching the design studio completes assessment rubrics for each enrolled student. Data is used to access student outcomes defined by the Interior Design program.

Assessment strengths include sampling of student work in the first semester of the second year and again in the final capstone class of the graduate program. Because department learning outcomes should be evident in all upper level design studios, the assessment process has the potential to indicate marked improvement in student achievement across the program.

Assessment challenges include increased pressure from CIDA to provide progress reports indicating both how we addressed indicated weaknesses in the 2011 reaccreditation visit and how we have measured the success of our program modifications. Due to the upcoming reaccreditation visit in 2017 this year of assessment aligns learning outcomes with CIDA standards which CIDA requires us to measure.

Proposed 2015-2016 LOAs
LOA 1 - Apply all aspects of the design process to identify and explore design problems and generate creative solutions that enhance the human experience in interior environments;
LOA 2 - Apply color principles and theories with regard to the functional, behavioral, aesthetic, and/or cultural needs of users of interior environments and in aspects of visual communication;
LOA 3 - Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of building systems and interior construction systems on design solutions;
LOA 4 - Understand and apply laws, codes, standards, and guidelines that affect the design of interior spaces, particularly through fire detection and suppression

The SLO’s were revised early in 2015 after the graduate program revision was approved and passed. The revised MA program offers greater emphasis upon increased rigor through higher cognitive levels of learning, course requirements, and a stronger emphasis upon evidence-based design research. The latter is becoming more prevalent in interior design practice and is in keeping with masters-level education at Marymount.

Review of student work remains the direct indicator for SLO’s. Since the revised program was implemented in fall, 2015, two courses were assessed as in 2013-2014. Instructors from ID 605 and ID 699 reviewed student work using the rubric in the Appendix.

For an indirect measure, the department conducted an email exit survey of the graduates. Using a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree), the alumni were asked to respond to each of the 4 SLO’s assessed this year.

The strength of the assessment lies in its evaluation of student work as a direct outcome and the exit survey as an indirect measure. Both provide different pictures of student learning. All SLO’s can be assessed through specific characteristics evident in student work. This is in line with and supports our accreditation because CIDA requires direct evidence from student work to support findings of the program’s self-study.

One weakness is that work of only a few students was evaluated because of a small number of cohorts. Next year’s assessment will include more students as Graduate Program numbers have increased.
The 2015-2016 assessment will help assess the effectiveness of the revised program. The main programmatic changes were increase in the number of architectural graphics courses (changed from 2 to 3) and also the lower level introductory studios (changed from 1 to 2). A stronger foundation in graphics and current issues in interior design should improve outcomes in upper level studios and in thesis. The additional studios offer students more opportunity for creativity, while learning the application of color and building foundational knowledge and skills for later studios (human factors, building codes, universal design). Additionally, a construction documents course was added; this addressed a weakness found in 2013-2014. Individual components of data collection and analysis using typical research methods in Interior Design (Observation, Behavior Mapping, Surveys, Case Studies) were added to the three Graduate Practice Studios, ID 605, ID606, and ID607. Students are introduced to research methods in their first semester, first year in ID 500. Then these methods are reinforced and applied in the following five studios.

Describe how the program implemented its planned improvements from last year:
The 2014-2015-assessment report had minimal recommendations for improvement because of the MA program revision work was synthesizing university assessment process and accreditation demands.

III. Outcomes were rated as Acceptable: Suggestions for re-wording of LO 1, LO 3, and LO4 were considered and compared with our CIDA accreditation standards. LO 1 has been revised to be more specific in it’s description of student learning. We maintain a coordination with CIDA and their expectations of LO 3 “demonstrate understanding” shows evidence of performance in student projects. LO 4 “Understand and apply” similarly reflects an accurate representation of content in student work as exemplified with drawings and synthesis of programmatic information. Performance standards based upon CIDA indicators were used in Outcomes 1, 3 and 4. We will use this language for this year to comply with CIDA’s standards and may consider revising after the site visit and Visiting Team Report is received in 2017-2018.

IV. Assessment Measures and Targets were rated as Acceptable. Suggestion to clarify what “minimal” and “adequate” and “strong” evidence means is something we will do this year for students, faculty, and for assessment purposes. Internship is not required for the MA program. We do offer ID 590 Practicum as an elective and is not elected to do by a majority of the students and due to this we have no data for this reporting period.

VI. Use of Assessment to Improve Effectiveness rated as Acceptable-" #2 What is the rationale behind the statement, "Student self-assessment should improve?", and " What changes are being made to help this happen?" This comment references the exit survey outcomes and indicates the change in the graduate program enrollment and the future increase in number for our alumni who will have experienced the revised program and more in-depth courses. We anticipate the alumni will improve in their recognition of what they know. The program revision with additional architectural graphic studios and additional foundation studios, and the new construction documentation course ID 545 are changes we have made to make this happen.

Recommendations for 2016 Assessment Report suggests “revising some of the language in the learning outcomes, in line with the comments. All SLO’s can be assessed through specific characteristics evident in student work. This is in line with and supports our accreditation because CIDA requires direct evidence from student work to support findings of the program’s self-study. We
will revise language following CIDA’s accreditation site visit and visiting team report in 2017-2018.

Provide a response to last year’s University Assessment Committee review of the program’s learning assessment report: New Learning Outcomes were created and put into the catalog early in 2015. They are assessed in this report.

Outcomes and Past Assessment

Learning Outcome 1: Comprehend and use all aspects of the design process to identify and explore design problems through A) generation of multiple design concepts or design responses to programmatic requirements and B) generation of creative solutions that enhance the human experience in interior environments

Is this outcome being reexamined? ☐ Yes X No
If yes, give a brief summary of previous results (including trends) and any changes made to the program.

Assessment Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Measures</th>
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<tr>
<td>Explain how student learning will be measured and indicate whether it is direct or indirect.</td>
<td>Define and explain acceptable level of student performance.</td>
<td>Discuss the data collected and student population</td>
<td>1) Describe the analysis process. 2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A) Direct measure; student work was assessed by the studio and thesis instructors</td>
<td>Rubric uses a 0-3 point scale. Values: 0-no evidence 1-minimal evidence 2-adquate evidence 3-strong evidence Standard: 80% of students must obtain a 2 or 3 for the outcome to be met.</td>
<td>Assessment rubrics distributed to faculty of ID 605 (Master Studio I) and ID 699 (Thesis or Design Research Project II); faculty assessed students’ final projects using 0-3 value scale Nine students assessed in ID 605; 6 in ID 699; all were in the first professional masters program.</td>
<td>1) Student scores recorded by class in a table for analysis. See appendix 2) 77% of students received a 2 or 3 on this outcome in ID605 and 100% of students received a 2 or 3 on this outcome in ID699. The outcome was not met in ID605 as shown in the students’ abilities to generate multiple design concepts or design responses to synthesize information collected during programming. But the outcome was met in ID699 which indicates growth in student comprehension of this learning outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Direct measure; student work was assessed by the studio and thesis instructors</td>
<td>Rubric uses a 0-3 point scale. Values: 0-no evidence 1-minimal evidence 2-adquate evidence 3-strong evidence</td>
<td>Assessment rubrics distributed to faculty of ID 605 (Master Studio I) and ID 699 (Thesis or Design Research Project II); faculty assessed students’ final projects using 0-3 value scale</td>
<td>1) Student scores recorded by class in a table for analysis. See appendix. 2) 72% of students received a 2 or 3 on this outcome in ID699; and 66% of students received a 2 or 3 on this outcome in ID605. The learning outcome was not met as shown in the student work showing creative thinking through presentation of variety of</td>
</tr>
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Standard: 80% of students must obtain a 2 or 3 for the outcome to be met.

9 students assessed in ID 605; 6 in ID 699; all were in the first professional masters program. ideas, approaches, and concepts. The learning outcome standard was not met.

Indirect Measure: Exit Survey

Students asked to respond to a 5-point Likert scale
5 = Strongly agree
4 = Agree
3 = Neutral
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree

Standard: 80% of students would strongly agree or agree

5 of the 2016 graduate student alumni responded to the email survey

1) Student answers recorded in table for analysis. See appendix
2) 100% of students strongly agreed or agreed. The learning outcome was met.

Interpretation of Results

Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students (Use both direct and indirect measure results):
This department’s threshold for success was not met. 75% of students obtained a 2 or 3 for the outcome using a direct measure of student work. The threshold for success was exceeded by 20% in the indirect measure.

Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:
A) 13 out of 15 students (86%) assessed for this outcome received either a 2 or 3 value (strong to adequate evidence), showing this to be a programmatic strength. Both ID 605 and ID699 students’ work showed strong evidence (3), 40% of the students received 3’s. Thesis students are now required to include design thinking and process work, which shows multiple concepts. There is evidence of process on the project presentation boards and thesis books. The Direct Measure showed 2 students having minimal evidence for this learning outcome. The faculty noted that these students work demonstrated an advanced understanding of the design problem but they struggled to synthesize creative solutions due to undeveloped design communication skills. Improvement would include more 3’s (strong evidence) among the ID 605 and thesis graduate students and more evidence of exploration of design problems through the generation diagrams and sketches of varied design concepts and multiple design responses to the programmatic criteria.

Data from the indirect measure supports the findings of program strength in direct measure since all students strongly agreed or agreed (92%) that they both comprehended and were able to use the design process.

Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:
This year, all studio and thesis students are required to integrate design thinking in their design projects showing process work which demonstrates this outcome complying with CIDA’s standards. Process work will show multiple concepts and creative solutions through generating multiple ideas, approaches,
and concepts. Students are encouraged to show their design development work in their final books and to include this in their displays of their design responses on the presentation boards. No other program or curricula changes are planned.

**Learning Outcome 2:** Select and apply color principles and theories with regard to the functional, behavioral, aesthetic, and/or cultural needs of users of interior environments and in aspects of visual communication;

**Is this outcome being reexamined?**  Yes X No

*If yes, give a brief summary of previous results (including trends) and any changes made to the program.*

**Assessment Activity**

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<td>Assessment rubrics distributed to faculty of ID 605 (Master Studio I) and ID 699 (Thesis or Design Research Project II); faculty assessed students’ final projects using 0-3 value scale</td>
<td>2) Present the findings of the analysis including the numbers participating and deemed acceptable.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Standard: 80% of students must obtain a 2 or 3 for the outcome to be met.</td>
<td>9 students assessed in ID 605; 6 in ID 699; all were in the first professional masters program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Measure: Exit Survey</td>
<td>Students asked to respond to a 5-point Likert scale 5 = Strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Neutral 2=Disagree 1=Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>5 respondents of the 2016 graduate responded 4 or 5 agree or strongly agree (100%).</td>
<td>1) Student scores recorded by class in a table for analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard: 80% of students would strongly agree or agree</td>
<td></td>
<td>2) 72% of students in ID699 and 66% of students in ID605 received a 2 or 3 on this outcome. The learning outcome was not met. 3 students show minimal evidence in their work in 605 and faculty assessment noted their color palettes were underdeveloped and lacking in application of concepts learned through readings in the semester. ID 699 assessment of 2 students rated work as showing minimal evidence of this knowledge or skill. The learning outcome was not met.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Student answers recorded in table for analysis. See appendix

2) 88% of students strongly agreed or agreed (3 4’s and 2 5’s). The learning outcome was met.
**Interpretation of Results**

**Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students** *(Use both direct and indirect measure results):*
This department's threshold for success was not met by 11% in a direct measure. The indirect measure met the standard by 8%.

**Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**
The majority of students assessed by the faculty received a 2 or 3 value (adequate to strong evidence), the 72% did not meet the department’s standard. A slight improvement in use of color was evident between the two classes. 33% of ID 605 students’ work received a 3 (strong), 33% received a 2 (adequate), and 33% received a 1 (minimal evidence). 3 out of 6 thesis students received a 3 (50% Strong Evidence), one received a 2 (17% Adequate Evidence), and 2 students received a 1 (34% Minimal Evidence). The thesis students have not experienced the changes made in the MA program revision of 2 additional studios in which to develop color skills. The department expects future thesis students will show improvement.

Student work covered a variety of different interior environments from workplaces, to residences, to permanent supportive housing. Color was used functionally and behaviorally for way-finding and differentiation of spaces and aesthetically and culturally to indicate sustainable materials and a sustainable or green interior environment.

Student self-assessments exceeded our expectations by 8%. The majority (5), strongly agreed or agreed that they could apply color based on various factors.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**
In the revised program, color theory and application is specifically addressed in three studios: Studio I & 2 and Sketching and Rendering (ID 122), and requirements for application of color in varied interior environments is covered in all other studios. Additionally, thesis students are required to create design recommendations, which could include color, and annotate them on their floor plans and other drawings.

A new elective course ID538 Color, Light, and Human Perception has been created and added to the program to deepen the MA program’s offerings in the study of color principles and theories. The course was developed and approved by GSC in Spring 2016. This new course will provide in-depth study of color theories, applications of color and lighting in interior environments and associated human responses to color effects in design to support and strengthen the design education at Marymount University. “Color, Light, and Human Perception” investigates the interdisciplinary nature of the color field, including color as wavelengths of light, biology of color vision, psychology of color perception, and the function of color and light in art, architecture, film, branding, and popular culture.

The department sees a need for more color theory to enhance the understanding of color taught in the graduate interior design program. It's the consensus of the department based on a thorough assessment of our students' needs and the current standards' requirements from CIDA, that more enrichment and in-depth understanding of the interaction of these critically important design elements in interior design are needed. Our Advisory Board also has noted that there is a need for entry-level designers to have a more thorough understanding of color and light for varied interior design applications. The recommendation from our accreditation agency in their new standards; and the advice given from the Interior Design Advisory board are why this course was created as an elective to enrich the course offerings in our graduate program.

Student Outcome Assessments should improve as more color theory is incorporated in the curriculum.
Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of building systems and interior construction on design solutions, specifically distribution systems and vertical circulation;

Is this outcome being reexamined?  ☐ Yes  ☑ No
If yes, give a brief summary of previous results (including trends) and any changes made to the program.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values:</td>
<td></td>
<td>2) 92% of students in ID605 received a 2 or 3 on this outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-no evidence</td>
<td>90% of students in ID605 received a 2 or 3 on this outcome.</td>
<td>100% of students in ID699 received a 2 or 3 on this outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-minimal evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td>The outcome is met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-adequate evidence</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>3-strong evidence</td>
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<td>Standard: 80% of students must obtain a 2 or 3 for the outcome to be met.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Indirect Measure: Exit Survey</td>
<td>Students asked to respond to a 5-point Likert scale</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 = Strongly agree</td>
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<td>See appendix 2) 92% of students strongly agreed or agreed so the learning outcome was met.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4= Agree</td>
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</table>
**Interpretation of Results**

**Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students** *(Use both direct and indirect measure results):*

This department’s threshold for success was exceeded by 12% in ID605 and by 20% in Thesis. This outcome is a direct measure as it assesses student work for knowledge of the impact of building systems upon interiors. Specifically assessed were distribution systems such as, such as HVAC or plumbing and vertical circulation, such as stairs and/or elevators. Direct measure of the outcome was met. The threshold for success was exceeded by 12% in the indirect measure. Student self-assessment also met the outcome.

**Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**

Fourteen students received a 2 or 3 (adequate or strong evidence) on this outcome. Thesis students received two 3’s and four 2’s; 8 students in ID 605 received 3s. This indicates an improvement in student performance in the 605 studio course. 4 out of 6 thesis students received 2s, so there is room for improvement in Thesis and a need for more 3’s and no 1’s in this SLO as it is an important aspect of Interior Design professional practice.

Five alumni responded strongly agree or agree (100%). This exceeds the findings on the direct measure.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

This SLO is part of ID 605 in the program and the majority of scores are in the 3’s (strong). Spring 2016, thesis has shifted to a studio format class so work should begin to integrate stronger evidence of the impact of building systems and interior construction. Stronger documentation of this SLO is required on thesis projects. No other program or curricular changes are planned.

**Learning Outcome 4:** Understand and apply laws, codes, standards, and guidelines that affect the design of interior spaces, particularly through fire detection and suppression;

**Is this outcome being reexamined?** ☐ Yes X No

If yes, give a brief summary of previous results (including trends) and any changes made to the program.

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<td>Assessment rubrics distributed to faculty of ID 605 (Master Studio I) and ID 699 (Thesis or Design Research Project II); faculty</td>
<td>1) Student scores recorded by class in a table for analysis. 2) The learning outcome assessed at 78% in ID605 did not meet faculty expectations of 80% in evidence. Instructor noted that not all students addressed vertical circulation, HVAC, and plumbing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### 3-strong evidence

Standard: 80% of students must obtain a 2 or 3 for the outcome to be met.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>assessed students’ final projects using 0-3 value scale</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Nine students assessed in ID 605; 6 in ID 699; all were in the first professional masters program.</td>
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Guidelines set by the program assignment. In ID699 the learning outcome assessed at 80% meeting the expectations of 80% in evidence.

### Indirect Measure: Exit Survey

Students asked to respond to a 5-point Likert scale

- 5 = Strongly agree
- 4 = Agree
- 3 = Neutral
- 2 = Disagree
- 1 = Strongly Disagree

Standard: 80% of students would strongly agree or agree

<table>
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<th>5 of the 2016 graduate exit survey responded to the email survey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Student answers recorded in table for analysis. See appendix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) 84% of students strongly agreed or agreed so the learning outcome was met.</td>
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</table>

### Interpretation of Results

**Extent this learning outcome has been achieved by students** *(Use both direct and indirect measure results):*

This department’s threshold for success was met in the direct measure for ID699 and in the indirect measures. The threshold for success was not met in ID605 by 2%.

**Program strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to assessment of outcome:**

The work of the nine students in ID 605 showed (66%) strong evidence and (22%) adequate evidence for this outcome. 50% of the thesis work showed strong evidence, 33% showed adequate, and 16.67% showed minimal evidence.

Strongly agree responses in the exit survey were 80% answered strongly agree (4 out of 5, a majority) and 1 neutral response. The finding directly compares to the direct indicators of ID699.

**Discuss planned curricular or program improvements for this year based on assessment of outcome:**

This particular outcome was measured for the first time in thesis ID699 in spring 2016. Subsequent semesters, thesis design projects should begin to demonstrate stronger evidence of the laws, codes, and guidelines particularly in fire detection and suppression. Reflected ceiling plans, which help show fire detection and suppression are now required in thesis projects. Reinforcing this SLO in thesis is intended to boost student knowledge in laws, codes and standard and should reflect higher scores in next year’s alumni exit survey. No other program or curricular changes are planned.