

# Institutional Effectiveness Report

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## Assessment Summary

**Department or Division:** [Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences \(& Pre-Engineering\)](#)

**Degree Program:** [Geosciences](#)

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**Assessment Cycle** (academic or calendar year): [2008-2009](#)

**Mission** (related to VSU mission):

- [Environmental Geosciences \(EVG\) provide important intersection between natural and social sciences](#)
- [EVG contributes to VSU's commitment to \(a\) excellence and responsiveness \(see student evaluations\), \(b\) technologically enhanced learning \(GIS, CAD, etc.\), \(c\) disciplinary and interdisciplinary programming \(CUR, Science Seminar Series, Center for Applied Research, etc.\), \(d\) public service and technical assistance \(Lowndes County, City of Valdosta, City Schools, SGRDC, etc.\), and \(e\) scholarly work and professional development \(conferences, publications, grants, etc.\)](#)

**Assessment History** (discuss here how and when the program developed its current assessment program, what it used prior to starting that program to assess its effectiveness, etc.):

- [until 2003, capstone seminars \(including student portfolios\) were used to assess the effectiveness of the EVG program](#)
- [Since 2003, EVG majors need to write a senior thesis as their final piece of scholarly work; senior theses must be presented at the departmental level \(oral presentation / PowerPoint\); students are also asked to participate in CUR, GAS, GSA, etc. \(accepted abstracts and senior thesis work for CUR, GAS, GSA, etc. as success assessment\). \[As of 2009, presented senior theses will be evaluated by department members, specifically geosciences faculty, to assess senior thesis work in regard to scholarly quality and presentation of independent research.\]](#)
- [Departmental EVG alumni database and newsletter keep track of where former majors end up after graduation. Information on EVG students entering the employment market or graduate school serves as additional measure of success and effectiveness of EVG program.](#)
- [As of 2009, both Geog 2010 \(Tools of Environmental Geosciences\) and the Senior Thesis sequence \(Geog 4860-4862\) will include assessments of EVG majors at the beginning and at the end of each unit to measure effectiveness of EVG program](#)

### **Expected Student Learning Outcomes:**

- **acquire working knowledge of basic research tools in geology and geography**
- **comprehend the physical and cultural diversity of our planet, and acquire fundamentals of place name geography**
- **understand mapping techniques and quantitative methods to describe and analyze spatial data**
- **acquire GIS skills for digital mapping, data manipulation, and analysis of spatial data**
- **address and analyze regional environmental questions and recommend solutions to a range of environmental problems**
- **understand relationship between people and the environment**
- **comprehend regional and global interdependence of economics, politics and societies**

**Assessments** (include when and to whom these are administered, and align goals with specific assessments):

- **EVG majors have to write a senior thesis to apply their undergraduate work and acquired knowledge towards independent scholarly work. Goals?**
- **EVG program alumni database and newsletter monitors students entering employment market or graduate school as measure of effectiveness. Goals?**
- **At the end of each semester, VSU wide evaluations are collected from students. Goals?**
- **As of 2009, Geog 2010 and the senior thesis sequence (Geog 4860-4862) will include assessments of majors at the beginning and end of each unit to measure effectiveness of EVG program. Goals?**

### **2005-2006**

- **Assessment Results (submit an electronic file of the data collected):**
  - **Senior thesis work (scholarly content/presentation/assigned grades)**
  - **Student evaluations**
  - **Annual EVG Program evaluations**
  - **EVG alumni (ask Alumni Office for information?)**
- **Discussion/Dissemination of Results:**
  - **Discussion and evaluation of EVG program (curriculum, senior thesis work, etc.) by Geosciences faculty at regular area committee meetings**
- **Modifications Made:**
  - **Proposal and creation of a dual track curriculum (geology / geography) (implementation in Fall 2006)**

## 2006-2007

- Assessment Results (submit an electronic file of the data collected):
  - Senior thesis work (scholarly content/presentation/ assigned grades)
  - Student evaluations
  - Annual EVG Program evaluations
  - EVG alumni (ask Alumni Office for information?)
- Discussion/Dissemination of Results:
  - Discussion and evaluation of EVG program (curriculum, senior thesis work, etc.) by Geosciences faculty at regular area committee meetings
- Modifications Made:
  - Curriculum for Geog 2010 was modified (implementation in Fall 2007)

## 2007-2008

- Assessment Results (submit an electronic file of the data collected):
  - Senior thesis work (scholarly content/presentation/ assigned grades)
  - Student evaluations
  - Annual EVG Program evaluations
  - EVG alumni (ask Alumni Office for information?)
- Discussion/Dissemination of Results:
  - Discussion and evaluation of EVG program (curriculum, senior thesis work, etc.) by Geosciences faculty at regular area committee meetings
- Modifications Made:
  - Changes and additions to senior thesis sequence proposed to strengthen quality and effectiveness of senior thesis work (implementation in Fall 2008)

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**Dept. Head/ Director**  
**Date**

**Date**

**Dean**

**Date**

**VPAA**

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Adapted from: University of Alabama SACS site (<http://sacs.ua.edu/degreeInfo2.cfm?college=2&dept=50>);

University of Western Kentucky SACS Accreditation Review Process (<http://www.wku.edu/sacs/assessmentmanual.htm>); and

Mrs. Marila D. Palmer, VP-Executive Affairs & Planning, LeTourneau University, Presentation to 2008 SACS-COC Institute