1. Executive Summary

The Medieval Studies Program performs two primary functions at Loyola University New Orleans: (1) it supports an interdisciplinary academic minor and contract major in Medieval Studies for interested students from all of the undergraduate colleges and (2) fosters general interest in the Middle Ages on campus and within the larger community through its programming.

The Medieval Studies Program was founded in 2001 as an interdisciplinary minor in the former College of Arts and Sciences (now the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences) by the late Julian Wasserman, a holder of a Provost Distinguished Professorship and a teacher of medieval literature in the Department of English at Loyola. From the beginning, however, medieval studies at Loyola have always been as much of a presence outside undergraduate classrooms as within their walls. Professor Wasserman sought to bring the Middle Ages to life for willing students in a variety of settings, including the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts, Lusher Elementary School, and a Summer Teachers Institute sponsored by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

The subsequent arrival of medievalists in a number of departments across the University introduced a new phase in the development of the Program, with the creation of new courses, the implementation of a revised curriculum, the institution of the Venerable Bede Award to recognize the outstanding achievements of Medieval Studies students, and the inauguration of two new extracurricular activities: Pizza and Movie Nights and the Greater New Orleans Medieval Scholars (GNOMeS) book discussion group. The Program has also hosted a number of lectures by scholars of national and international distinction as well as the 2008 meeting of the Louisiana Consortium of Medieval and Renaissance Scholars. At any given time during the last five years, we have at least eight and as many as 21 minors and a total of four contract majors. Graduates of the program are currently pursuing advanced degrees in medieval studies at, among others, the University of Cambridge, the University of Exeter, Western Michigan University, and Louisiana State University.

The program continues to do much with little. Our operating budget of $1,350.00 is insufficient for supporting our extensive programming, and we have routinely sought support, especially for lectures, from the Biever Lecture Fund, the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, the College of Music and Fine Arts, the Institute for the Study of Catholic Culture and Tradition, the Catholic Studies Program, the Jesuit Social Research Institute, the Office of Mission and Ministry, and various departments. Our programming is well-attended, but support for it is currently insufficient. We receive the same amount of funding as other interdisciplinary programs that do considerably less, and promises by the Office of the Provost of operating budgets in the amount of $1500 for 2010-2011 and $3500-5000 for 2011-2012 have not been made good. The demands on the Chair of the program have also increased over the last five years, yet the Chair receives no stipend or course release and has no administrative support staff.
2. **Unit Identification/Profile Summary**

2.1. **Name and Mission**

Medieval Studies (Interdisciplinary Minor)

The Medieval Studies minor seeks to foster an understanding of the cultural monuments of the European Middle Ages both as accomplishments worthy of study in their own right and as the source of countless institutions of, and questions about, modernity in the West. In keeping with the mission of the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, the faculty pursue a multidisciplinary approach to teaching and research that emphasizes the interrelatedness the many fields of human knowledge.

2.2. **General Statement and Descriptive Information**

The Medieval Studies Steering Committee includes representatives from the three core areas (History, Literature [English], and Thought [Philosophy/Religious Studies]) and faculty from other related departments as approved by the Steering Committee. Representatives serve two-year terms which are renewable by a majority vote of the Steering Committee. A Chair is elected from among the members of the Steering Committee to serve a renewable two-year term. The Steering Committee maintains the academic curriculum and arranges for extra- and co-curricular programming. The minor consists of 18 hours of coursework. HIST A306, “Middle Ages,” and ENGL A316 “Medieval Literature,” are required and both are offered on a biennial basis. Students must also take one Thought course from a list of approved offerings in Philosophy and Religious Studies. The remaining six hours are satisfied by electives drawn from the regular offerings of participating departments. All coursework must be approved by the Medieval Studies Chair, who functions as the adviser to all minors, and must be distributed across at least three different departments. Extra- and co-curricular programming includes our regular film series (an average of two film screenings per semester with pizza and a faculty expert to introduce the film), our discussion group for area medievalists, and at least one major lecturer per year. A chartered student organization, Gamma Delta Rho, is available for interested students and in recent years has co-sponsored a living chess game with the University Honors Program during the spring semester.

2.2.1. Headcounts of staff: n/a

2.2.2. Headcounts of faculty: n/a

2.2.3. Headcounts of undergraduate students: 6 as of 10F

2.2.4. Headcounts of graduate students: n/a

2.2.5. Retention rates: n/a

2.2.6. Graduation rates: n/a

---

1 Medieval Studies finished AY10-11 with 9 minors and 1 contract major.
3. **Assessment**

3.1. **General Statement on Assessment**

During the period 2004-2008, we examined one area of our program each year to determine what changes needed to be made to meet our learning objectives. We made determinations and changes on the basis of: the consensus of the faculty committee as demonstrated through minutes and votes; peer course observations and evaluations; discussions with students and suggestions submitted from students in writing; evaluations of student portfolios; developments in the discipline as appropriate for our department and institution. This method of program assessment proved to be only moderately successful, in large part because of the limited faculty buy-in. There is no incentive for faculty outside of the Steering Committee to participate in curricular assessment, and consequently our efforts to date have been partial at best. While the members of the Steering Committee have more than demonstrated their commitment to the program, all have obligations to their home colleges, departments, and other interdisciplinary programs that limit their availability for participation in fuller assessment. Historically there has been little or no institutional support for assessment activities within interdisciplinary programs, all of which results in much of the responsibility for assessment resting on the shoulders of the program’s Chair. Historically the Chair receives no stipendiary support or course release time and has no budget for assessment, nor does the current Chair possess any particular expertise or training in assessment. The result is that assessment within the program has been haphazard at best, despite recognition on the part of the faculty involved in the program of the value of assessment generally.

3.2. **Program Goals for 2010-2011**

The Medieval Studies program neither has now nor has had in recent years, if ever, a strategic plan. The program identified the development of a full strategic plan as a goal in 2007-2008 but failed subsequently to achieve that goal largely because the Chair was also serving as the Deputy Director of the University Honors Program during that same period. While a comprehensive strategic plan remains a desideratum of the Steering Committee, the simple fact of the matter remains that developing such a plan requires resources of time that the already overburdened members of the Steering Committee do not possess. The four regular members of the Steering Committee have between them directed the University Honors program, chaired a department in the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, served as an area director within the College of Music and Fine Arts, chaired the Common Curriculum Task Force, and directed two other interdisciplinary minor programs during the last four years. We are among the most active faculty on campus in terms of service, scholarship, and off-campus professional activities. The program therefore had no specific goals tied to any strategic plan during 2010-2011.

3.3. **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Students should be familiar with the basic framework of western European history in the Middle Ages and the methods for creating that framework.
- Students should be familiar with major works of medieval literature written in English and translated from other languages and methods for interpreting those works.
c. Students should be familiar with major works of philosophy or theology in the Latin Middle Ages and methods for interpreting those works.

d. Students should be familiar with products of medieval culture outside of literature (music, visual arts, etc.) and methods for interpreting those works.

e. Students should be able to communicate ideas in oral and written form.

3.4. Assessment of Internal and External Factors Affecting the Unit

Despite lacking a strategic plan, the program did pursue two primary assessment activities during the course of 2010-2011. The Steering Committee (1) continued a conversation begun in 2009-2010 about the possibility of expanding the program to Medieval and Renaissance Studies and (2) began a program evaluation using the “Systematic Assessment Guide” compiled by Heather Mack and distributed during a Spring 2011 assessment workshop.

3.5. Assessment of Community-Related Activities

While program faculty have engaged in community-related activities, we have not formally assessed those.

3.6. Assessment Results

The program did not formally assess our student learning outcomes this year. These outcomes were, however, the subject of our assessment activities during the period 2004-2008. The assessment activities outlined in 3.4 supra are ongoing and will carry us into 2011-2012. We intend to spend the summer preparing to gather data during Fall 2011 that will enable us to decide by the end of that semester whether to expand into Medieval and Renaissance Studies. The results so far of our program evaluation appear in appendix 7.3 infra.
4. Summary of Achievements

4.1. Unit as a Whole

As of the end of the academic year, nine students were participating in the minor, including two graduating seniors and seven returning students. One of those seniors, Maria Rossi, was the recipient not only of the program’s Venerable Bede Award but also of one of the Ignatian Awards, the highest honor bestowed by Loyola on a student. Maria has been admitted to the master’s program in Philosophy at Tulane University. We also added a new contract major, sophomore Theresa Bullington, bringing our total number of contract majors to four in as many years. We were able to draw on the resources of contributing departments to offer 16 courses during 2010-2011 (not including summer courses), despite two of our most important faculty, Drs. Alice Clark and Mark Gossiaux, taking year-long sabbaticals. Our core faculty continue to be incredibly productive contributors to the University as well as to their professional fields.

Medieval Studies continued to host a “Medieval Film Festival,” which included screenings in Fall 2010 of *King Lear* (1971) and *The Return of Martin Guerre* (1982) and in Spring 2011 of *Mongol* (2007) and *Pope Joan* (2009). As always, each film was introduced by a faculty expert who also facilitated a discussion of the film afterwards. This year we invited two new faculty experts to present films, Dr. Hillary Eklund (English) and Dr. Rian Thum (History). Film screenings continue to draw audiences of between 10 and 30 people per event. We also hosted two more meetings of the Greater New Orleans Medieval Scholars (GNOMeS) book discussion group, an event that brings medievalist faculty from colleges and universities in the greater New Orleans area together on Loyola’s campus. On November 11, 2010, the program sponsored a lecture by Dr. Kate Crassons, Associate Professor of English, Lehigh University, entitled “Poverty, Literature, and Interpretation: The Case of Piers Plowman’s Half-Acre.” The lecture was co-sponsored by the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, the Department of English, the Catholic Studies Program, and the Jesuit Social Research Institute and was well attended. For the second year, we hosted an end-of-term barbecue in the spring as a means of celebrating our achievements and sending off our graduating students. Also for the second year Medieval Studies supported the annual “Salon de Jeanne,” sponsored by the Krewe de Jeanne d’Arc, a community organization committed to celebrating New Orleans’s ties to Joan of Arc. The program also participated in putting together a successful proposal to bring Jesuit Scholastic Sylvester Tan, S.J., to Loyola for two or three years. Professor Tan will join the faculty in the fall and offer an upper-level course in French on medieval culture and an Advanced Common Curriculum course on the Arthurian legend.

4.2. Faculty Achievements/Service: n/a

4.3. Staff Achievements/Service: n/a

4.4. Student Achievements

a. In 2010, seven students traveled to Toronto to perform a medieval play as part of a three-day dramatic festival and symposium entitled “Chester 2010: peril and Danger to Her Majesty.”

b. Danielle Smith (’08) earned her Master’s in Medieval Studies from Western Michigan University in 2011.
c. G. Nicholas Courtney (’10) received one of two Davies-Jackson Scholarships awarded in 2010 and is currently studying medieval philosophy at St. John’s College, University of Cambridge.
d. Lauren Cherneski (’10) is completing her Master’s in Medieval Studies at the University of Exeter and has received funding to support her Ph.D. work on the legal status of illicit sexualities in southwestern England.
e. Maria Rossi (’11) earned the Venerable Bede Award for Outstanding Graduate in Medieval Studies.
f. For the second year in a row a Medieval Studies student has received the Ignatian Award, the highest award bestowed by Loyola on a student. G. Nicholas Courtney received the award in the 2010 and Maria Rossi in 2011.

4.5. Community Engagement Achievements

Over the last year the Program has worked to forge a relationship with the Krewe de Jeanne d’Arc to support community interest in New Orleans’s “medieval” history.
5. **Budget**

5.1. 2010-2011 Operating Budget: $1,350.00

5.1.1. **Budget discussion**

The program continues to do much with little. Our operating budget of $1,350.00 is insufficient for supporting our extensive programming, and we have routinely sought support, especially for lectures but also for other activities, from the Biever Lecture Fund, the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences, the College of Music and Fine Arts, the Institute for the Study of Catholic Culture and Tradition, the Jesuit Social Research Institute, the Office of Mission and Ministry, the Catholic Studies Program, and various departments. Our programming is well-attended, but support for it is currently insufficient. We receive the same amount of funding as other interdisciplinary programs that do considerably less, and promises from the Office of the Provost of operating budgets in the amount of $1500 for 2010-2011 and $3500-5000 for 2011-2012 have not been made good. The demands on the Chair of the program have also increased over the last five years, yet the Chair receives no stipend or course release and has no administrative support staff. Currently the chairs of interdisciplinary programs have no input in budget discussions, and the entire budgeting process lacks transparency and seems at best arbitrary.

5.2. 2011-2012 Operating Budget: $1,350.00

5.2.1. **Budget discussion**

Since there is no change in the budget, there is no change in the discussion. The Chair was never consulted about the budget and indeed had to ask to find what if any budget he had at all, since currently there is no mechanism in place for communicating the budget to the program. The entire budgeting process needs desperately to be overhauled. Furthermore, the Chair should not need to have each expenditure approved by the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. This process is cumbersome and delays reimbursement. Interdisciplinary program Chairs need to have the same budget authority and autonomy as Department Chairs.
6. Planning and Goals for 2011-2012

6.1. Strategic Planning
Medieval Studies does not currently have a strategic plan. Nevertheless the Chair of the program has continued to meet regularly with other program directors as part of the Interdisciplinary Studies Group convened by the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. That group determined at its April 2011 meeting that it would spend 2011-2012 producing a collective strategic plan that encompasses all of the interdisciplinary programs. In the absence of a formal plan, our goals for next year have been determined through regular meetings of the Steering Committee, including an end-of-the-year assessment and planning meeting attended by Drs. Sara Butler (History), Alice Clark (Music), Hillary Eklund (English), Mark Gossiaux (Philosophy), and John Sebastian (English, Chair).

6.2. Support of the University Mission
Despite lacking a current strategic plan for the program, in its activities and aspirations Medieval Studies is clearly in line with the University’s mission and strategic goals. By means of its interdisciplinarity the program reflects St. Ignatius of Loyola’s emphasis on “finding God in all things” and “is grounded in the liberal arts and sciences” (University Mission Statement). Our participating faculty strive “to educate the whole student” through their “teaching, research, creative activities, and service,” as reflected in the quality and variety of our courses, our efforts in mentoring students both through active advising and through direction of undergraduate research (our faculty routinely direct undergraduate theses), our outstanding scholarly output, our participation in and leadership of some of the most significant programs and committees at the University, and our support of extracurricular activities intended to stimulate interest in the Middle Ages (University Mission Statement). Our participating faculty seek “to benefit the larger community” through their participation in a variety of local organizations, volunteer services (e.g., in the STAIR tutoring program), and community talks on aspects of our work (University Mission Statement). One of the three principal goals of the University’s Strategic Plan is the enhancement of the University’s reputation and stature, which includes an action plan for bolstering academic programs. The Strategic Plan outlines an initiative to

Enhance existing distinctive programs and those which demonstrate unique market advantages; develop new programs and strengthen existing programs that are distinctive in subject matter and that are cross-disciplinary, interdepartmental, and inter-college programs based on subject matter upon which no other University competes; and house interdisciplinary studies and other cross-college programs in a centralized location. (*Loyola 2012*)

Given its interdisciplinary nature and its emphasis on the Catholic intellectual tradition, Medieval Studies should be part of this ongoing initiative to shore up existing interdisciplinary programs that are both distinctive (if not entirely unique) and competitive.

6.3. Program Goals
a. Medieval Studies will participate in drafting a collective strategic plan for interdisciplinary studies programs in cooperation with those programs.
b. We will continue our discussion of a possible expansion to Medieval and Renaissance Studies with a goal of making a final decision at the end of Fall 2011 and based on data gathered during that semester.

c. We will begin to implement some of the recommendations that have arisen from our program evaluation (see 7.3 infra).

d. We will sustain our current level of programming while seeking opportunities to expand our activities.

e. We will renew efforts to gather student data using our existing tools (see 7.1 infra) and through a new course evaluation instrument that we will design.

6.4. Student Learning Outcomes

a. Students should be familiar with the basic framework of western European history in the Middle Ages and the methods for creating that framework.

b. Students should be familiar with major works of medieval literature written in English and translated from other languages and methods for interpreting those works.

c. Students should be familiar with major works of philosophy or theology in the Latin Middle Ages and methods for interpreting those works.

d. Students should be familiar with products of medieval culture outside of literature (music, visual arts, etc.) and methods for interpreting those works.

e. Students should be able to communicate ideas in oral and written form.

We did not assess our student learning outcomes in the previous year, having recently completed a four-year assessment of these outcomes.

6.5. Community Engagement

The Chair of the program is currently working with Amy Kirk Duvoisin, Director of the New Orleans-based Joan of Arc Project, to develop a partnership between Loyola Medieval Studies and the Joan of Arc Project in advance of the sexcentennial anniversary of Joan’s birth in 2012.

6.6. Resources

Medieval Studies will presumably continue to be supported by an operating budget provided by the Office of the Provost, although funding for interdisciplinary programs has historically been unstable. The program also has a very small gift account sustained exclusively by faculty payroll deductions. We will continue to seek additional support internally and externally, but the necessity of doing so is exhausting, especially given that other programs, which do very little by comparison, are funded at comparable levels. For the program to continue to operate at its current levels and for it to experience the same level of success, additional resources are necessary. The University continues to proliferate these programs (we have gone from eight minors to 13 minors and two majors in the last three years) without providing adequate funding to support them. Currently, interdisciplinary programs are not part of any University fundraising efforts, a situation that should be addressed.

The program also continues to be overly dependent on courses provided by extraordinary faculty, a less than ideal situation. For instance, of the 16 medieval studies courses offered in 2010-2011, five were offered by adjunct faculty members and one by the Dean of the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences. This dependence on adjunct faculty means that we have very inconsistent course offerings
from semester to semester, making it difficult for the program to advise students as effectively as it would like. Ideally, interdisciplinary program directors would be engaged in college-level discussion of faculty hiring plans to ensure that we have the faculty to support existing programs.

6.7. Assessment Plan
Medieval Studies does not have a formal assessment plan for the upcoming year but intends to continue its full-scale program evaluation using the “Systematic Assessment Guide” provided at the assessment workshop earlier this year.
7. Appendices

7.1. Student Data Collection Tools
The program has developed several student data collection tools over the last several years, although the current Chair has admittedly been lax in employing them. Attached are the student-learning outcomes matrix; senior interview questionnaire; student portfolio cover sheet; and student semester goals questionnaire that we have used on and off over the last several years.

7.2. Other Data Collection Tools: n/a

7.3. Assessment Reports
See the attached report generated by our program evaluation using the “Systematic Assessment Guide.”

7.4. Additional Supporting Documentation
Attached are recommendations generally endorsed by the Medieval Studies Steering Committee for relocating interdisciplinary studies from the Office of the Provost to the Colleges.
### 7.1 Assessment Matrix

**Medieval Studies minor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIST-A306 (required); electives</td>
<td>ENGL-A316 (required); electives</td>
<td>electives (12 hours, distributed in at least three departments, chosen in consultation with advisor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A. Students should be familiar with the basic framework of western European history in the middle ages and the methods for creating that framework.**

1. Discuss the basic chronology of medieval history both in its broad outline and detailing the most significant events.
   - in-class discussion, exams
   - in-class discussion, exams
   - in-class discussion, exams

2. Discuss the military, political, social, economic and/or intellectual context of significant events, individuals, institutions or periods.
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

3. Discuss the interrelationships between sacred and secular authority in medieval Europe.
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

4. Discuss and analyze primary sources and the ways in which they are used to create modern interpretations of significant events, individuals, institutions or periods.
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

**B. Students should be familiar with major works of medieval literature written in English and translated from other languages and methods for interpreting those works.**

1. Discuss the conventions, history and special techniques of that genre.
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

2. Analyze the significant stylistic features of the passage.
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers

3. Discuss the place of the passage in the career of its author and in the history of the genre.
   - in-class discussion, exams, papers
4. discuss the place of the genre in its literary and cultural context

C. Students should be familiar with products of medieval culture outside of literature (music, visual arts, etc.) and methods for interpreting those works.

1. discuss the basic stylistic features of one non-literary artistic genre (music, manuscript illumination, architecture, sculpture, etc.)

2. discuss how a work of medieval culture was affected by its historical, intellectual, and/or spiritual context

D. Students should be able to communicate ideas in oral and written form.

1. write essays and papers on medieval subjects

2. make in-class oral presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Format</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>discuss the place of the genre in its literary and cultural context</td>
<td>in-class discussion, exams, papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students should be familiar with products of medieval culture outside of literature (music, visual arts, etc.) and methods for interpreting those works.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. discuss the basic stylistic features of one non-literary artistic genre (music, manuscript illumination, architecture, sculpture, etc.)</td>
<td>in-class discussion, exams, papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. discuss how a work of medieval culture was affected by its historical, intellectual, and/or spiritual context</td>
<td>in-class discussion, exams, papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students should be able to communicate ideas in oral and written form.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. write essays and papers on medieval subjects</td>
<td>exams, papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. make in-class oral presentations</td>
<td>in-class discussion, presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medieval Studies Exit Interview
2006

Name: _________________________________

Major: ________________________________

What do you see as the strengths of the Medieval Studies program here at Loyola?

What do you see as the weaknesses of the Medieval Studies program here at Loyola?

Do you feel there was adequate coverage of the Middle Ages (both chronologically and geographically) in the selection of courses offered by Loyola?

Was there enough variety in the medieval courses offered?

Do any of the following events sound at all interesting to you?
Would any of the following potential courses sound appealing to you?

- Medieval Medicine and Medical Practices
- Late Medieval Drama (this course would include putting together an actual production of a medieval play)
- Medieval Women’s Literature

Do you feel you received adequate advising with your Medieval Studies Minor?

On behalf of the Medieval Studies Minor Committee, thank you for participating in this survey!

Sara Butler
Chair, Medieval Studies
Medieval Studies Minor Portfolio
Cover Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name___________________</th>
<th>Year admitted____________________</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-mail__________________</td>
<td>Year minor declared____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major?__________________</td>
<td>Year declared____________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other major/minor?_______</td>
<td>Year declared____________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisor________________</td>
<td>Permanent Address__________________</td>
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Medieval Studies Coursework

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<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Date Work Submitted</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIST-A306</td>
<td>“The Middle Ages”</td>
<td>___________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL-A316</td>
<td>“Medieval Survey”</td>
<td>___________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS/PHIL__</td>
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Personal Goal Statements (beginning and end of each semester)

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<td>Spring</td>
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<td>Exit Review</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Other major/minor? _______ | Year declared____________________ |
| Advisor________________ | Permanent Address__________________ |


Medieval Studies Minor Portfolio
Cover Sheet
(for students who registered prior to program changes)

Name___________________   Year admitted____________________
E-mail__________________   Year minor declared_________________
Major?__________________   Year declared______________________
Other major/minor?_______   Year declared______________________
Advisor__________________
Permanent Address______________________________________________________

Medieval Studies Coursework

*Courses must span three different departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Date Work Submitted</th>
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Personal Goal Statements (beginning and end of each semester)
Fall _______ _______ _________ ______
Spring _______ _______ _________ ______ Exit Review______
Beginning of the Semester Goals for _________________________(semester/year)

Name_____________________________________________

Please think about your academic goals for the semester.

1. What skills do you want to develop this semester in medieval studies?

2. What other learning objectives will you address this semester?

3. How will your work in medieval studies this semester address your career goals?
Assessment of Learning Goals for ________________ (semester/year)

Please think about your academic progress this semester.

1. What skills did you develop this semester in medieval studies?

2. What other learning objectives did you address?

3. Is there anything you hoped to accomplish that you did not? Why?

4. How did your course work in medieval studies this semester address your career goals?
7.3 Program Assessment

Medieval Studies – Chair’s report

Using the “Strategic Assessment Guide” (hereafter SAG) furnished by Heather Mack at an assessment workshop earlier this year, Sara Butler, Hillary Eklund, and I began undertaking an assessment of the Medieval Studies program in a series of meetings during the 2010-2011 academic year. I suggested that initially we focus on questions 1-4, 7-8, 10 and 13 from the SAG, with the possibility of exploring other questions as appropriate.

Our discussion so far has been limited to questions 1-3. A summary of that discussion follows.

1. **How do you define success for your program? What changes would you like to see in your program?**

   We were quick to agree that success for Medieval Studies is not necessarily measured in numbers of declared minors. We recognized that the interdisciplinary nature of our program frees us from the direct pressures felt by some departments to bolster their numbers of majors and minors as a means of securing increased resources, especially in the form of faculty lines. We are able to interpret success both more loosely and more broadly. And, in our case, it was suggested that it would be more helpful to begin tracking not only the number of minors and contract majors that we have in the program but also the number of students who take multiple Medieval Studies courses outside of a formal minor.

   We identified several *desiderata* that, if achieved, may be indicators of the program’s success. These included stimulating and supporting an intellectual culture on campus; engaging student interest, both academic and co-curricular, in medieval history and culture; and enjoyment, ours and that of the students, derived from our programming. That Medieval Studies has been successful in facilitating faculty cross-pollination through, e.g., hosting guest lecturers like Kate Crassons, sponsoring the Greater New Orleans Medieval Scholars (GNOMeS) book club, etc., is also an indicator of success.

   Going forward there isn’t necessarily much that we would change; rather, we would like to sustain, and better still build on, these successes.

2. **Who knows whether that change is happening and what the quality of the change is?**

   In general people do not know about the successes of our program. Re-developing our web site and increasing our web presence will provide us with one venue to promote our successes. (N.b.: I have since been trained on Drupal and will be reassuming oversight of our Web site this summer.) Within the university community, people do not know enough about the program, from students to faculty
and administrators. We need to brand the program and market it better and more effectively. We are one of the more active interdisciplinary programs on campus, and we need to make that known. Several suggestions for increasing our presence on campus were offered including:

- attaching a blog to our web site
- developing a presence on Facebook
- making greater use of the university’s calendar of events

3. **What information does each party have that would be useful for you to know?**

Currently the chair of Medieval Studies does not have the ability to review course evaluations for courses offered in the minor. While it may be inappropriate for the chair to have access to all of the evaluation data gathered using the university-wide instrument, it would be helpful to receive at least a digested version of some of the raw data.

Alternately, or perhaps additionally, we should develop our own evaluation instrument in order to assess courses’ value to the program. We could develop a paper form or use a tool like Survey Monkey. It might also be worthwhile to work with directors of other interdisciplinary programs to develop a general form that could be used by all of our programs.
7.4 A Response to the Deans’ Council’s Report on Interdisciplinary Studies Programs

Some suggestions/ideas/recommendations for restructuring IDPs

1. The Interdisciplinary Studies Programs² (hereafter IDP) should be housed in and administered from the Colleges.
   a. The preference for home College should be determined by the individual IDP committees in consultation with the Deans. In general, the home college should be determined based upon which college supports the preponderance of the courses and faculty that contribute to the IDP, but in cases where the IDP is spread fairly evenly across colleges, the IDP may choose with which College it prefers to affiliate for administrative purposes. (Alternately, the home College might be automatically determined based on College affiliation of the IDP Director.)
   b. The Director of the IDP will report to the Dean through whatever channels are appropriate to the College’s structure (e.g., Council of Chairs and Directors, College Assembly, individual meetings with the Dean, etc.).
   c. The Dean of the home College will communicate with other Deans as appropriate.
   d. The Dean will serve as an advocate on behalf of the IDP with the Office of the Provost, the Web Team, the Library, the Office of Institutional Advancement, and other divisions.
   e. The IDP Director and Dean will consult on curricular development and planning, including scheduling courses; development of introductory, capstone, and team-taught courses; occasional hiring of extraordinary faculty to support IDPs; and the development of interdisciplinary majors. The Dean will facilitate communication between the IDP Director and Department Chairs.
   f. The IDP Director should be included in College-level planning regarding faculty hiring.
   g. The IDP will be included in the College’s strategic planning processes, fundraising efforts, marketing plans, advising initiatives, and recruitment activities.
   h. The Director of the IDP will be responsible for conducting regular program assessment according to College procedures and for submitting timely reports as requested by the Dean.

2. The IDP Directors will elect from among their members and on a rotating basis a Liaison to serve as relay between the IDP Directors and the Deans’ Council.
   a. The Liaison will report to the Deans’ Council at least once per year at the invitation of the Deans and will communicate the needs of the IDPs, individually or collectively as needed, to the Deans. Having opportunities to engage with all of the Deans simultaneously is especially important, given that most IDPs span multiple Colleges.
   b. The Liaison will report on the outcome of these meetings in writing to the IDP Directors.
   c. The Liaison will also serve as the Chair of a self-governing committee of the IDP Directors and will convene at least one meeting per year, and as many as necessary, of all of the IDP Directors to discuss matters pertaining to IDPs in the aggregate. The duties of this committee could include:
      i. drafting a general strategic plan and protocols for all IDPs;
      ii. developing a common course evaluation instrument to gather supplemental data about interdisciplinary courses;

² African and African-American Studies, American Studies, Asian Studies, Catholic Studies, Computational Science, Environmental Studies, Film Studies, Latin American Studies, Legal Studies, Medieval Studies, Middle East Peace Studies, New Orleans Studies, and Women’s Studies, both majors and minors. Other interdisciplinary studies programs (e.g., the University Honors Program, the B.A. in Liberal Studies) are not considered here.
iii. developing general assessment strategies and tools.
d. The current Interdisciplinary Studies Group as should be disbanded.

3. The Office of the Provost will continue to provide support in the form of operating budgets for the IDPs and additional administrative support as needed.
   a. Appropriate operating budgets should be determined through transparent processes that include the Provost, the IDP Directors, and the Deans.
   b. As soon as possible, the Office of the Provost should also create an administrative assistant position to support the work of the IDPs and their Directors.
   c. The Office of the Provost will provide assistance as needed with university-wide reaccreditation initiatives.
   d. As soon as possible, the Office of the Provost should begin to support the IDP Directors with stipends and/or course releases as appropriate.

4. Additional recommendations
   a. The IDP Directors should be granted SIS privileges equivalent to those of Department Chairs in order to support effective advising. Currently Directors are limited to five SIS screens.
   b. The IDP Directors should be given full authority over their operating budgets equivalent to that of Department Chairs. Currently all expenditures must be approved by the Office of the Provost.
   c. Monies should be identified either at the provostial or decanal level for supporting interdisciplinary course development, including funding to departments to cover lost courses for faculty who teach an introductory or capstone course for an IDP and support for alternative team-teaching models (e.g., small stipends for faculty to teach several weeks of an interdisciplinary course as an overload, following the example piloted in 2008 and 2010 in MUGN H295, “The Medieval Imagination: The Age of the Cathedrals,” in which three faculty from two Colleges taught three weeks of the course each and received a $500 stipend).