Auburn University Samford Hall Tower Logo in orange and blue**ASSESSMENT REPORT**

## Consumer & Design Sciences (CADS) Graduate Program, MS-Thesis, MS-Non-Thesis, & PhD

The CADS graduate program covers the same disciplines as the undergraduate program, broken out as Interior Design, Apparel Merchandising, and Apparel Design. Graduate students identify their topical arena through their choice of courses, major professor, and graduate committee members rather than through declaring a major. Thesis students must earn at least 30 credit hours including the thesis; non-thesis students must earn at least 36 hours including a project. Doctoral students must meet University requirements for a minimum of 60 hours including the dissertation.

* Within their individualized programs, thesis and non-thesis master’s students have the same set of required courses composing 13-14 hours: Protocol for Graduate Study (1), Survey of Consumer and Design Sciences Research (3), Research Methods in Consumer and Design Sciences (3), student choice of one of four theory courses (3), and a statistics course (3-4).
* Doctoral students have the same set of required courses except that they must take two theory and two statistics courses.

Program size averages approximately 25 students, with a relatively even split between M.S. and Ph.D.

students.

## Student Learning Outcomes

### Specificity of Outcomes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **GRADUATE GOALS** | **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES** |
| **Inquiry and Analysis** | SLO1 Students will be able to assess, integrate and apply theoretical and empirical information to identify and address current issues and/or problems relevant to their focal area. Demonstrated skills at the M.S. level will exceed expectations for undergraduate students and at the Ph.D. level will exceed expectations for M.S. students. |
| **Critical Analysis** | SLO2 Students will demonstrate critical analysis skills in examining text, data, or issues developing new knowledge and placing it within the broader environment of established theoretical and empirical knowledge. Demonstrated skills at the M.S. level will exceed expectations for undergraduate students and at the Ph.D. level will exceed expectations for |
| **Written**  **Communication** | SLO3 Students will demonstrate appropriate written communication skills in  thesis/dissertation presentations and other scholarly work. Demonstrated skills at the Ph.D. level will exceed expectations for M.S. students. |
| **Oral**  **Communication** | SLO4 Students will demonstrate appropriate oral communication skills at the M.S. level that exceed expectations for undergraduate students and at the Ph.D. level exceed expectations for M.S. students. |

### Comprehensive Outcomes

The student learning outcomes were developed by the CADS Graduate Committee beginning in 2010 and were revised a few years later after the first feedback on assessment was provided. In any given year, the relative proportion of master’s and doctoral students, as well as the numbers in each of subject matter areas varies. Thus, assessment across the programs must focus on achievement of higher level (than undergraduate) skills that are generalizable and important to their success as graduate students.

### Communicating Student Learning Outcomes

The Student Learning Outcomes are available to all faculty through the annual sharing of assessment reports.

## Curriculum Map

**Required courses** (for all incoming students)

CADS 7050 Research Methods in Consumer and Design Sciences – SLOs 1-4

CADS 7060 Survey of Consumer and Design Sciences Research -- SLOs 1-4

CADS 7980 or 7990; 8990 Graduate Project or Research & Thesis, or Research and Dissertation – SLOs 1-4

**Required selections:** Each M.S. must take one theory course, and each Ph.D. student take two theory courses from the following list.

CADS 7100 Environmental Design Theories and Applications – SLOs 1, 3-4

CADS 7200 Aesthetics Theory in Consumer and Design Sciences – SLOs 1, 3-4

CADS 7670 Social Psychological Theories in Clothing Behavior – SLOs 1, 3-4

CADS 7690 Consumer Theory in Apparel and Interiors – SLOs 1, 3-4

## Goal 3: Oral Communication

## Measurement

### Outcome-Measure Alignment

**Learning Outcome SLO3 – CADS 7200 Aesthetics Theory in Consumer and Design Sciences** (3 credit hour lecture course)

SLO3 Students will demonstrate appropriate written communication skills in thesis/dissertation presentations and other scholarly work. Demonstrated skills at the Ph.D. level will exceed expectations for M.S. students.

### Direct Measures

Qualitative evaluation of student PowerPoint slides presenting students’ research proposals at the end of Spring 2017 semester and developed during the semester in CADS 7200. The rubric was previously designed for assessment purposes. Five M.S. and two Ph.D. students were in the class and were evaluated.

### Data Collection

Two to four CADS graduate faculty attended at least part of the presentation session and evaluated the PowerPoint slides using the rubric. Thus, each presentation was evaluated by at least two faculty members. The rubric is inserted below. The Graduate Program Officer averaged the scores.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **CAPSTONE 4** | **MILESTONE**  **3** | **MILESTONE**  **2** | **BENCHMARK**  **1** |
| **Context and Purpose**  Consideration of assigned task, context, time, purpose, and audience | Demonstrates  *comprehensive understanding* of context, audience, time, and purpose, and is thoroughly focused on task | Demonstrates  *adequate consideration* of context, audience, time, and purpose, and shows alignment with the assigned task | Demonstrates  *awareness* of context, audience, time, purpose, and the assigned task | Demonstrates  *minimal attention* to context, audience, purpose, time, and partial focus on assigned task |
| **Content Development**  Presentation of information to explain the project | Provides *all*  necessary, relevant, and appropriate content to explain the project, conveying the writer's understanding | Makes *adequate*  use of necessary, relevant, and appropriate content to explain the project. | Uses *some* of the  necessary, relevant, and appropriate content to minimally explain the project. | Makes *minimal* use  of the necessary, relevant, and appropriate content for incomplete explanation of project. |
| **Genre and**  **Disciplinary Conventions** Formal and informal guidelines for  effective slide writing in academic setting | Demonstrates *close*  *attention to and successful execution* of conventions including organization, flow, formatting, and stylistic choices. | *Uses important*  conventions including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices. | *Demonstrates some*  application of conventions including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices | *Attempts to use* a  consistent system for basic organization and presentation. |
| **Syntax and**  **Mechanics** Construction of phrasing and presence of errors | *Clear, efficient and*  *effective* phrasing skillfully communicates content and is virtually *error-free*. | *Mostly clear*  phrasing that generally conveys content and has *few errors*. | *Relatively clear*  phrasing with  *several errors*. | *Unclear or*  *inefficient phrasing and multiple errors* sometimes impede understanding. |

## Results

### Reporting Results

MS students (*N* = 5). The average scores and ranges of scoring by the faculty were as follows:

Context and Purpose (3.4, 1-4)

Content Development (3.3, 2-4)

Genre and Disciplinary Conventions (3.2, 1-4) Syntax and Mechanics (3.3, 2-4)

PhD students (*N* = 2). The average scores and ranges of scoring by the faculty were as follows:

Context and Purpose (3.2, 2-4)

Content Development (2.7, 2-4)

Genre and Disciplinary Conventions (3.1, 2-4)

Syntax and Mechanics (2.8, 2-4)

### Interpreting Results

The results suggest that both Master’s and Doctoral students performed above Milestone 3 in their written communication of ‘Context and Purpose’ and ‘Genre and Disciplinary Conventions’. The range of scores for the doctoral students was higher, with none of the doctoral students receiving a benchmark score; whereas, one Master’s student did receive a benchmark score. The Master’s students performed better than the Doctoral students in ‘Content Development’ and ‘Syntax and Mechanics’, although both groups performed in the Milestone 2 and 3 range. The relatively lower doctoral average could be explained in part by the fewer number of doctoral students in the class as compared to the Master’s students. In general, the averages of both groups were in the Milestone range, indicating the developing range of written communication skills among this group of graduate students. The lower range of the Master’s group did touch benchmark scores; whereas, the higher range of both groups reached capstone scores.

### Communicating Results

Results will be shared via email and in paper form first to the CADS Graduate Committee and then to all graduate faculty at the beginning of Fall 2017.

## Use of Results

### Purposeful Reflection and Action Plan

All CADS graduate faculty need to meet to identify which graduate courses incorporate assignments with Powerpoint presentations. The courses that all students must take, CADS 7050 and 7060, have consistently required them, and the introductory Protocol course contains an assignment in which each student critiques a past student presentation, sharing that critique with other class members. Assessment efforts could be planned to evaluate written communication outcomes over time and across PowerPoint and poster presentations, to see whether there is differences in the scores.

## Goal 3: Oral Communication

## Measurement

1. **Outcome-Measure Alignment**

**Learning Outcome SLO4 – CADS 7200 Aesthetics Theory in Consumer and Design Sciences** (3 credit hour lecture course)

SLO4 Students will demonstrate appropriate oral communication skills at the M.S. level that exceed expectations for undergraduate students and at the Ph.D. level that exceed expectations for M.S. students.

### Direct Measures

Qualitative evaluation of student oral presentations of their research proposals at the end of Spring 2017 semester in CADS 7200. The rubric was previously designed for assessment purposes. Five M.S. and two Ph.D. students were in the class and were evaluated.

1. **Data Collection**

Two to four CADS graduate faculty attended at least part of the three hour presentation session and evaluated the oral communication using the rubric. Thus, each presentation was evaluated by at least two faculty members. The rubric is inserted below. The Graduate Program Officer averaged the scores.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Score based on***  ***presentation and response to questions.*** | **CAPSTONE**  **4** | **MILESTONE**  **3** | **MILESTONE**  **2** | **BENCHMARK**  **1\*** |
| **Organization and**  **Language** | *Skillful*  organization and use of terminology | *Good* organization  and use of terminology | *Adequate*  organization and/or use of terminology | *Inadequate*  organization and/or use of terminology |
| **Delivery**  Eye contact, gestures, posture, expressiveness | *Polished, confident* delivery without consistent reading | *Comfortable* delivery with room for improvement | *Tentative* delivery, too much dependence on *reading* | *Delivery hampers* presentation of content |
| **Message/Content**  Relative to time and purpose | *Necessary material*  clearly presented in *designated time* | *Somewhat too*  *much/too little* material and/or time | *Clearly too*  *much/too little* material and/or time | *Planning for time*  *and material not apparent* |
| **Material to Support**  **Message**  Needed background or explanations | *Proficiently*  provides explanations or support as needed | *Good* provision of  most needed explanations or support | Provides *some but*  *not all* needed explanations or support | *Missing* needed  explanations or support |

## Results

### Reporting Results

MS students (*N* = 5). The average scores and ranges of scoring by the faculty were as follows:

Organization and Language (3.4, 1-4)

Delivery (3.2, 1-4)

Message/Content (3.5, 2-4)

Material to Support Message (3.4, 2-4)

PhD students (*N* = 2). The average scores and ranges of scoring by the faculty were as follows:

Organization and Language (2.7, 2-4)

Delivery (2.8, 2-4)

Message/Content (3, 2-4)

Material to Support Message (2.8, 2-4)

### Interpreting Results

The Master’s students’ average scores were better than the averages of the two Ph.D. students for all the measures of oral communication. These results are influenced by the fact that one of the two Ph.D. students is an international student, whose English communication is weak, and as a result, difficult to understand. Since there were only two Ph.D. students, the lower scores from the international student, negatively weighted the average scores for the Ph.D. students. Despite, this averages for the Ph.D. students were close to the upper milestone range. The Master’s students’ performance on oral communication was well above upper Milestone on all 4 measures. Students in both groups reached Capstone levels, whereas, one student in the Master’s group was at Benchmark level. In general, the oral communication skills among the graduate students in this class was in the milestone range, which is indicative of developing skills.

### Communicating Results

Results will be shared via email and in paper form first to the CADS Graduate Committee and then to all graduate faculty at the beginning of Fall 2017.

## Use of Results

### Purposeful Reflection and Action Plan

Most graduate student oral presentations occur at semesters’ end. The graduate faculty will discuss these results and those from previous years and consider other opportunities for oral assessment. These include a systematic effort to ask non-committee faculty to attend thesis proposal and defense meetings for the purpose of assessment, or to plan for evaluating presentations at professional meetings.