Note the department’s Physics BS program consolidation in 2012. Beginning in AY 2012-13 the department offers a BS Physics degree with optional concentrations in either physics, applied physics, atmospheric physics, technical management, or computational physics.

1. Assessment information collected

Exiting graduates are requested to complete a questionnaire surveying their feedback on the program; they have the opportunity to provide supplementary comments in writing. In order to provide the maximum amount of anonymity for the surveyed students, the survey process is handled entirely by the department administrative assistant, who is requested to provide a compilation of the responses in a manner that ensures that anonymity. The faculty in attendance at the final presentations of the program’s O/W class are requested to provide comments on the overall – not individual – competencies evidenced in that venue.

During the period under review, the program graduated seven students from the BS Physics program, one student from the BA Physics program, and four students from the BS Applied Physics program; as one student completed both the BS Physics and the BS Applied Physics programs, this is eleven distinct individuals. Although the BA Physics and BS Applied Physics programs have been closed, surveys received from students from those programs will be included in the assessment process.

Three surveys were available for the assessment process, two from graduates of the Applied Physics program and one from a graduate of the Physics program. It is possible that more surveys could have been
obtained from graduating students. However, due to the retirement of the department administrative assistant, and the lack of overlap between that outgoing staff member and their replacement (as per the ongoing policy of not refilling empty positions immediately), the department lacked the means to continue to solicit surveys from students who had not yet responded. Based on prior years, this might have resulted in the receipt of another three surveys.

2. Conclusions drawn from the information summarized above

The following conclusions, based on the undergraduate surveys, must be viewed with some caution since they are based on a small number of responses. The undergraduate student responses were uniformly positive in their assessment of the program(s), both via the survey and in the written comments.

All three responses saw a need for improvement in the availability of undergraduate research opportunities, an area that is currently extracurricular. Similarly, the written comments mostly cited extracurricular aspects of the program (undergraduate study room; physics student club; an “intimate”, “positive and encouraging environment”; faculty accessibility and commitment.) The single written comment directly relevant to the curriculum suggested that the curriculum could be better linked. This is a topic which has had some discussion in the past, and that comment gives it additional weight.

The faculty reviews of the presentations in the O/W course found a satisfactory level of performance in both the written reports and the oral presentations. This sample comment reflects the overall impression contained in the four written reviews: “students had a professional demeanor and took the talks seriously – they would have done well at a scientific meeting presenting at this level.” One reviewer noted that there was a correlation between presentation skills and mastery of the theoretical structure underlying the topics of presentation, which is to be expected for the range of abilities in any group of individuals. the department has decided to make no curricular changes at this time.
3. **Curricular changes resulting from conclusions drawn above**

As a result of the limited set of information on which to base conclusions, as well as the short amount of time since the consolidation of programs under the single BS in Physics program with optional concentrations in specialized areas, the department has decided to make no curricular changes at this time.

4. **Identify the faculty members involved in reaching the conclusions drawn above and agreeing upon the curricular changes resulting**

The department continues to consider to all aspects of the SLOA process, up to and including the proposal and implementation of curricular changes, as a body of the whole. Discussions on curricular assessment are taken up via regular agenda item at the beginning of each fall, subsequent to the receipt and compilation of exit surveys.