Guide to Narrative Evaluations for Faculty
Updated January 2017

This guide was produced by a cross-college team of faculty and built on work done by others over prior years. As a working draft, we suggest people read and try the suggestions this year and then, as a faculty, we can discuss and adjust.

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About This Guide

The recommendations for the writing of narrative evaluations contained in this document grew out of a series of workshops and discussions that took place over four years including 30 faculty from across the college.

The initial discussions were a continuation of the analysis of Division II begun by the 2011-12 Educational Policy Committee. In the summer of 2013, each school undertook a conversation from their deep knowledge of the Division II process of what made for a good Division II, leading to some guidelines for Division II for students and advisors. The natural progression from there was to examine Division II evaluations to determine whether we actually evaluate students on those criteria we deemed important. As a part of their self-study for external review, four schools (CS, CSI, HACU and IA) undertook analyses of their Division II evaluations. Building on the work of each school before it, the result was a Division II evaluation guideline for faculty and revised guidelines for the Division II for students.

By and large, faculty who used the Division II guidelines found them useful in crafting their Division II evaluations and a number of faculty requested similar guidelines for other types of evaluations. These requests came from faculty at all stages of their careers and particularly from the growing numbers of new faculty.

At the same time, the Hampshire Learning Project (an internal qualitative research project on the Hampshire experience) began a longitudinal study of Hampshire students, called the "Hampshire Impact Study." Through our interviews, we learned that students often used their narrative evaluations to set their goals. Students want and truly appreciate constructive and evaluative feedback on their work both during the semester and in their course evaluations. Many students look across their evaluations for patterns and endeavor to improve their work based on faculty feedback.

In this document, we include overarching principles about narrative evaluation, specific information about what is present in the current transcript, specific suggestions for the writing of each type of evaluation in a Hampshire transcript, examples, and of course, recommendations for change in our policies and practices. We hope you find this guide useful!

About Narrative Evaluations

There are a number of potential audiences for evaluations: the student, advisors, graduate schools, employers and internship supervisors, and scholarship/granting organizations. For most of these audiences, what is useful is a discussion of overall progress, skills, and abilities. There is an "additional comments" box that is internal to Hampshire College and that can be used for more specific feedback to the student and advisor.

From our examination of evaluations, we found that:

- Faculty tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative or to be evaluative only in the most general of terms. Overall, our evaluations and transcripts are too long, too descriptive, and sometimes lack evaluative comments specific to the student.
- Evaluations range greatly in length -- from a few sentences to a few pages. In addition, some are highly detailed, while others are quite vague. No extreme seems to serve the potential audiences or the students well. We offer comments and/or suggested lengths in the following evaluation pages.
- Faculty sometimes write evaluations that duplicate information found elsewhere in the transcript or neglect to include information that they assume is in the transcript but is not. Note that the student contracts, self evaluations, and retrospectives are NOT part of the transcript. It is important to note that student transcripts include a list of completed courses.

Our suggestions are guided by the following principles:

- Across the board, evaluations should **begin with overarching summative evaluative comments** and followed by more description/details. Specific feedback on individual assignments are formative and should be given during the semester rather than in the final evaluation.
- Writing course evaluations should be **linked to the syllabus** (what are the goals, what should students produce, what are the requirements for evaluation, etc.). Evaluations are best when students know what they will be evaluated on and get practice developing those skills with feedback during the semester.
- The utility of the evaluations is dependent on **timeliness**.
- With regards to Division I and II evaluations, our time is best used advising students to make sense of their work across their experiences rather than in digesting their work for them in the evaluation. We suggest that **Division I and II evaluations be shorter**. You will see specific suggestions on the Division I and II evaluation pages, as well as further recommendations for policy changes in our recommendation section.

- We anticipate that Division III evaluations will be the most variable. Aside from some suggestions for organization and length, we therefore offer only a few recommendations for Division III evaluations.

As you write, think about your evaluation criteria. Below is a list generated in a faculty workshop in case it is helpful:
- Analytic thinking skills/ Analytical writing
- Writing in a specific genre
- Research abilities
- Independent work/autonomy
- Uses of primary and secondary literature/substantiation of claims
- Reading skills
- Quantitative skills
- Ability to use qualitative and quantitative data
- Perspective taking/reflexivity
- Disciplinary methodology
- Ability to understand/use theory
- Integration of theory and practice
- Integration of ideas across authors/literatures/experiences
- Understanding of broader significance of their work (what is at stake, etc.)
- Time management/work ethic
- Coursework how they build on knowledge; how seriously they take it
- Response to feedback
- Self reflection – awareness of strengths and weaknesses
- Collaborative skills
- Appropriate breadth and depth sustained commitment
- Ability to ask good questions (framing) in class/projects/in Division II
- Thoughtful engagement
- Disciplinary knowledge and skills
- Ability to revise work
- Locating oneself in a debate (positionality)

Remember, when writing evaluations, you:

- Cannot include a letter grade anywhere in the evaluation body
- Cannot name other students (e.g. students in collaborative groups)
- Cannot mention mental or physical health issues of the student you are evaluating
- Should use the student's preferred pronoun. It is good practice to remind students that you are required to write evaluations using preferred pronouns and that if they have a pronoun listed in their directory profile that is not the correct pronoun for official college documents, they should change it to reflect the correct pronoun.

Note: This document contains examples of each type of evaluation that we think typify our recommendations. They are not the only way to write according to these principles. Also, examples are blinded in the following ways: a) the words "the student" replaces names, b) "they/their" is the chosen pronoun, and c) fields and topics are replaced with bracketed content type.

Course Evaluations

Content
Course evaluations should reflect both what we as instructors value in the course as well as the trajectory of the student's work over the semester. It should be clear what the student did well and what they need to work on. Students should be evaluated on the overarching objectives as indicated in our syllabi and on those specific to assignments and general course expectations. These might include:

- Attendance
- Preparation and participation in class discussions and activities.
- Skills development (both discipline and course specific as well as those that reflect College's cumulative skills).
- Ability to conceive, organize, and undertake a term-length, viable research project that includes effective literature and methodological design (as per course requirements)
- Development of student's own goals and questions
- Demonstration of progress – the effective revision of written work

Indicate areas of strength and weakness and make a recommendation, if appropriate, for addressing areas in need of improvement (e.g. the student take their work to the Writing Center for additional support, etc.).

Focus on evaluative comments regarding overarching skills and abilities rather than on the details of specific papers and/or their arguments. Specific comments on assignments – contents, argument, etc. – are important for students to see over the course of the semester and should be included on each of the student's papers, rather than appear in the course evaluation. Course evaluations should contain overarching evaluative comments, particularly important for those students who plan to apply to graduate school.

Length
Given concerns around the length of Hampshire College transcripts in general, we strongly recommend that course evaluations be limited to 800-1200 characters (including spaces).

Organization
Ideally, the evaluation should begin with an overall assessment, e.g. "X exceeded the expectations for this class through their engaged participation, etc. ..." Or, "X missed an excessive number of classes and struggled to meet basic course expectations ..." Instructors might use terms such as superb, excellent, very good, adequate, bare minimum, more than met the expectations, struggled to meet the expectations, etc. The evaluation should then briefly (two or three sentences) offer an overview about the seminar and evaluation criteria. Then the evaluation should focus on the student's work in the course and how well they met these criteria. Personalize the evaluation through brief but specific examples. The student's performance trajectory in terms of improvement and/or progress could complete this section.
_____

Examples:

1. *From the outset, it quickly became clear that the student was an asset to the class. Students in this class were required to post weekly reading responses to an electronic forum, to respond to the comments of their colleagues on this forum, and to work on an extended research project on a subject of interest to [this field]. The student could be counted on to make insightful contributions to the electronic forum as well as to class discussions, and push their colleagues to think more critically about the readings. The student's reading responses generally incorporated good critical analysis and reflection and they wrote an insightful and well-researched paper critiquing the current state of [specific] policy and making a case for [specific outcome]. The student is clearly committed to achieving excellence in their academic work; it was a pleasure to have them in class.* (883 characters)

2. *The student did good work in the course overall. To receive an evaluation in this course, students were required to complete four conceptually challenging essays totaling 15-25 pages of writing. These assignments required critically reviewing [type of] articles, comparing major theoretical perspectives, and proposing new lines of research. Completion of the four assignments demonstrated satisfactory mastery of the course material. The student's essays consistently showed a good basic grasp of the material but also displayed some gaps in understanding. The student's self evaluation indicates that a fast-paced course in [field] may not have been the best fit at this point in their college career. It is very much to their credit that they stuck with it and turned out decent work. The student's academic writing is fairly weak both mechanically and organizationally. They will have to address this issue as they continue their academic career. The last meeting of this class was devoted to student presentations, and the student did an excellent job of [skill].* (1069 characters)

3. *The student was an excellent student who had incredible growth in the class. They grew more outspoken and articulate in their presentations and classroom engagement. Overall, their work was insightful and comprehensive. [Title of course] trains students' research skills to identify their audience and communicate appropriate ideas through making presentations and a performance on [more info on course content]. The student's presentations were informed by their deep knowledge of [specific] language and culture; they were also adept at locating the cultural perspective of the playwright. Their insights and practice of acting were specific and reveal a developed understanding of theatrical moment and event. Their bilingual creative responses have an ability to reimagine complexities of theatrical structure within their own experience. While their ideas are unique and exciting, they have room for improvement in writing. They write that dramaturgy should "unrestrict the mind" and, from their analysis, I encourage their continued dramaturgical practice for their own brilliant unrestricted mind.* (1116 characters)

4. *The student was a quiet but engaged student who entered the class somewhat late and struggled to catch up. They handed in all of the weekly homework assignments but many contained significant errors and inaccuracies. This level of comprehension was reflected in their poor work on three in-class evaluations. To their credit, the student retook all three of these evaluations and demonstrated enough improvement to warrant passing the course. They did very good work on the fourth, take-home evaluation. One of their musical compositions demonstrates a good understanding of rhythmic interplay while another composition on melodic contour attends to the assignment but lacks a convincing melody. Their first concert report offers some detail concerning the performance, but the essay lacks a central theme and the writing is somewhat disorganized. Their second report is better written. The essay contains some stylistic and grammatical problems, but on the whole, it is a fairly strong piece. The student's progress in ear training was steady with solid mastery of solfege and rhythm skills, but their intonation skills could use more work.* (1143 characters)

Division I Evaluations

The Division I is an opportunity for the student to learn to make sense of their own education. As advisors, we should be working with students on improving their reflection on and understanding of their academic experiences. Retrospectives should address prompts that guide them to look across their work and their evaluations and to write about their strengths, interests, challenges, and next steps.

We believe that reflecting on what one knows, understands, and is able to do – as well as knowing where one might struggle – is important in setting new goals and determining future directions. A student-generated retrospective (written in collaboration with the Division I advisor), combined with course instructor's comments on cumulative skills, currently available in the Division I Summary Page, meet the advising needs of both students and faculty.

Content
The transcript contains: 1) a description of the academic program, 2) the advisor's comments, and 3) the course evaluations used to satisfy Division I (the course evaluations will be moved to be integrated with all course descriptions in the future)

Length
The advisor's comments should be short (250 - 600 characters)[1]

Examples:

1. *The student's evaluations remarked on their capacity for critical thinking and independent work. They are ready to do more advanced learning, especially in [their area of choice]. Overall, they worked hard this year and accomplished much.* (241 characters)

2. *As their Division I portfolio and course evaluations demonstrate, the student is more than ready to pursue studies at the Division II level. Over the course of Division I, the quality of their work matured. They produced very strong work, with particularly good work in their areas of interest. Their academic and study skills are developing nicely and they have defined a promising focus for their Division II concentration centering on [fields]. I look forward to their future accomplishments.* (498 characters)

3. *The student worked hard to meet all the requirements of Division I. In the process, they've thrived as a student and as a person. They are very organized, dedicated, and curious. Most of all, they take initiatives—to learn, to approach professors, to*

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[1] See recommendations section for further discussion of the advisor's comments.

seek out new opportunities. All of these qualities will serve them well, and they are poised to do very well in Division II. (381 characters)

Division II Evaluations

The Division II is often what summarizes student work for the outside world – this is particularly important for students applying to graduate school, for internships, etc., before a Division III evaluation is completed. The potential audiences for the Div II evaluation include: the student; graduate schools; employers and internship supervisors; scholarship and granting organizations.

As with Division I, our time is best used in supporting students in making sense of their work across their experiences rather than in digesting their work for them. Chairperson's comments should be evaluative. Long Division II evaluations with quotes from evaluations are likely an artifact from the days when students selected only 3 narrative evaluations to include in their transcripts. Now all course evaluations are included.

As you write please know that a Hampshire College transcript automatically includes the title of the Division II, a list of courses, and course evaluations. In writing an evaluation, you do not have to list specific courses.

The Division II evaluation on the transcript includes the summary, evaluative comments, MCP and CEL-2, so there is no need to repeat the summary paragraph in the evaluative comments.

Note that the student contract and retrospective are not part of the transcript. That means that the student's explanations of their concentration, MCP and CEL-2 are not in the transcript. Though if you have them do a good job on their contract revision, you can edit their language for those evaluation sections.

Content

The first task of the Division II evaluation is to briefly summarize the concentration. Since the transcript contains a description of Division II, it need not contain boilerplate language about the nature of Division II. The main portion of the evaluation is the Chairperson's Comments. See more specific suggestions for content of these comments below, under "organization."

When you complete your evaluative comments you are currently asked to check off which evaluations would be included in the Division II section of the transcript. This will disappear in a future version of the evaluation and transcript. All course evaluations will appear together after all 3 divisional evaluations.

Length
We suggest a length of 3-5 paragraphs (300-500 words including Summary and Chairperson's comments).

Organization
Summary of the Concentration
This contains the description of the concentration: fields of study and can also include the student's goals and questions; can include what kinds of things are present (x *number* of courses and y internships). Student should have drafted this in their contract revision with our feedback.

Chairperson's Comments
- Begin with an overarching evaluation of the student's work in a few sentences or a short paragraph.
- You can evaluate the Division II itself – discuss such things as: appropriate depth and breadth, the sense the student makes of their Division II, how well the student synthesized ideas across their experiences to answer their own questions, how well they reflected on their overall process, how well they understood their own progress or the trajectory of their work, etc.
- Summarize the course evaluations to give an overarching sense of how the student mastered the materials and skills necessary to their Division II. This should be brief, focusing on most important skills and abilities the student gained and what they need to work on. For example, is this student heading to law school, and what would matter to those readers?
- You can give an overarching evaluation of the degree to which the student has been in charge of their own learning, setting goals and pursuing them, and identifying their interests and questions, etc.
- You can briefly assess how the student is prepared for Division III (e.g. they have grounding in queer studies, have developed methodologies in oral history, and need to work on substantiating their arguments with literature).

Multiple Cultural Perspectives - Describe how the student met the requirement; the student should have drafted this in their contract revision with our feedback

Community Engagement and Learning - Describe how the student met the requirement; the student should have drafted this in their contract with our feedback.

Examples:

1. Summary of Concentration
The student has successfully completed their self-designed Division II concentration. The student oriented their studies around a particular area of inquiry—[QUESTION]— and followed a rigorous interdisciplinary path to critically explore such concepts. In addition to their community service requirement and other supplemental activities

(including serving as a teaching assistant), the student completed a total of 18 courses in their concentration. They took challenging courses in law, philosophy, social psychology, biology, and behavioral science. Based on their coursework, and in particular in the variety of independent work he produced for these courses, the student identifies two themes that orient their work: [THEME 1, THEME2]

Chairperson's Comments
As their Hampshire professors note in their evaluations, [STUDENT] is an excellent student. They are a sophisticated critical thinker and a strong writer. They are self-motivated and intellectually curious. Most importantly, they have developed the research and analytical skills required to complete a Division III project. Many students would be content to have achieved a particular competence in critical reading and writing; the student is consistently willing to challenge themself to develop new skills and to enhance existing ones. Their early written work needed improvement, especially in terms of better reflecting their very good ideas in a more succinct and concise manner. The student took the constructive criticism offered by their instructors and committed himself to the writing process.

At the beginning of their Division II program, although clearly very bright and engaged with course materials, the student was so shy and so timid that they rarely, if ever, spoke up during class discussions. Yet, as their narrative course evaluations reveal, in time the student began to come into their own, regularly offering astute and measured comments in response to class readings and to their peers.
The student should be congratulated on completing a well-designed and rigorous Division II concentration. They are more than prepared to undertake an independent project in Division III. [word count: 323]

Examples:

2. Summary of Concentration
The student has successfully completed their self-designed Division II concentration in [fields]. The student took a series of challenging, writing-intensive courses in legal studies, philosophy, and critical race theory. They completed a series of independent projects on a range of subjects including [topics].

Chairperson's Comments
The student designed and implemented a relevant and rigorous program of study in Division II of appropriate depth and breadth. Early on in their Division II process, their professors often noted that while the student was keen and intellectually curious, they were not always able to effectively translate their very good ideas into writing. Yet, as their course evaluations reflect, they worked to transform her writing and ultimately produced a fine body of work reflecting exceptional skills in critical thinking, critical reading, and critical writing. For instance, in their final semester of Division II, their professors were unanimous in lauding her fine work:
"The student produced thoughtful critical essays and demonstrated a strong ability to conduct interesting research and craft original arguments."

"Their writing demonstrated active and thoughtful engagement with the course materials, the continuous development of their own thinking on different topics and engagement with their classmates' analysis and questions."
"The student's research and analysis is bold and relevant in the contemporary moment and warrants a further investigation during their career at Hampshire College and beyond."

As the student has refined their ideas and skill sets over the past five semesters, they have matured as a student-scholar and are now well prepared to approach a complex set of issues in Division III.   [word count: 259]

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3. *Summary of Concentration:*
For their Division II the student wanted to explore practical applications of computer programming languages and game development. Also important in their divisional work was preparing to work as part of a computer game development team. To achieve this, they took courses in both computer programming and computer game design and implementation.

Chairperson's Comments:
The student's course evaluations speak very well of their effort and performance. They have demonstrated to be particularly good at managing group projects, and in generating 2D and 3D computer art. They have learned how to work as a part of a team, contributing important pieces, both conceptual and applied, to the development of computer games. They were able to generate original project ideas, maintain time lines as well as receive feedback and incorporate it into future work. In courses involving mathematics and computer theory, they have shown to be thoughtful, and also able to provide clear explanations of their thinking, specially in oral form. They also have demonstrated the ability to analyze and evaluate their own work, both during and at the end of a semester. Their computer programming abilities are also documented as increasing as courses, and their Division II, progressed in time.

In closing, [this student] has managed to achieve the goals they set for their Division II process. They have demonstrated to be hard-working, and capable of good quality work in the type of settings that actual computer games are implemented in. Their skills in each of the areas involved in developing computer games has increased throughout their time in Division II. They are now ready to embark in more elaborate work in computer games design and implementation.

Multiple Cultural Perspectives:
For their Multiple Cultural Perspectives requirement, the student completed a study of the way that women are represented in computer games, documenting important examples that demonstrate discriminatory and sexist patterns in what is often a male-dominated field.

Community Engagement:
The student satisfied the Community Engaged Learning requirement by working on a Five College wearable technology workshop, a fashion show, and a Division III, all parts of a peer student's division III. [Word count: 387]

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4. Summary of Concentration:
The student's concentration is a study of the nuances and grey areas of society and social structures, and the intersectionality of how various grey areas connect through telling complex, socially responsible stories about difficult topics. It encompasses queer studies, creative writing in the forms of poetry, playwriting, and comedy.

Chairperson's Comments:
The Student's coursework has a thorough line of great potential and achievement that is thwarted by lateness and absence. It is a struggle that the student is aware of and is making efforts to alter. Their journey through Division 2 might best be described as an intellectual and emotional blossoming through deep internal reflection and increasing their capacity to show up by being responsible to community. As their development in identity politics continued, [Student]'s ability to listen while asking provocative and generous questions made them a vital and present classmate. Their creative work "deeply impacted" the audience and gave voice to the audience's own struggles.

From the beginning of Division 2, in Poetry and the Political Imagination, they are capable of an artist statement that reveals the knowledge of marginalized and invisible struggle: "I like to especially look at the moments that we like to turn our faces away from – the moments that we hope to not have to think about." Their evaluation revealed that these impulses needed development, and the trajectory of this growth can be seen in Introduction to Queer Studies, where [Student] showed thoughtfulness and insight in their written assignments. As they became more open to delving into personal experience, they were said to "demonstrate an advanced understanding of the relationship between race, gender, and sexuality." Their narrative evaluations emphasize them as a remarkable addition as a committed student who contributes well, and also revealing their struggle to meet basic requirements and attending class.

It is my recommendation that the student continue on this trajectory of valuing their voice and experience in the classroom, the rehearsal room, and the stage. By developing their written and creative analysis of social and communal history through delving into their personal experience, they are developing their skills of accountability and capacity to be present. They thrive on searching in a community, and this form of engagement builds their capacity to contribute. [Word count: 366]

5. *Summary of Concentration:* *The student's self-designed concentration was a study of arts integration in the elementary school. The student studied education and cognition, curriculum design, arts integration, theater for young audiences, the*

creative arts, and ethnographic methods. They had multiple practicums in classrooms and summer arts programs and volunteered for "Reader to Reader," a global literacy project. As they progressed in their studies, the student became more and more interested in reading comprehension and helping young people improve their reading through arts integration.

Evaluative Comments:
The student's concentration is a well-integrated study of arts integrated education. They grew as a thinker, as a teacher, and as a leader over their Division II. They have strong facilitation skills and an energetic presence working with young people. They took leadership roles in class and in their community engaged work and they taught in multiple settings. It is working with youth that keeps the student energized and moving forward in their academic work. They are prepared for a Division III project that further integrates critical literacy education with the arts in theory and in practice.

The student completed a deep examination of the role of art in students' motivation and learning and further developed their own artistic production across the arts. They gained particular skill in the use of theater as a tool to teach core studies in the elementary classroom and they began to examine its role in literacy instruction more specifically. The student uses arts integration to differentiate instruction, to support English Language Learners, and to help all students make connections among their ideas.

The student sets goals for their learning and reflects on their progress. They developed an impressive portfolio of arts integrated curriculum. The student's professors praise their creativity, clarity of ideas, and leadership skills, as well as clear and insightful writing, for example noting that they make connections across disparate literatures. Almost as often they note a need for greater detail. In either event, they note that the student makes rich connections in their spoken contributions in class.

One cannot read the student's transcript without noting that they have periods of difficulty with work completion. Despite this, they met regularly with faculty to discuss their work and to develop strategies and plans for getting the work done. The completion difficulties continue to be a problem for the student, but they did not interfere with what they ultimately produced. For example, the student decided during their Division II that they would learn about and produce an electronic portfolio of their work. Rather than pull together a paper portfolio that would have taken less time and effort, the student created a beautiful ePortfolio with clear documentation of their work, rife with reflective pieces. They experimented with multiple platforms, and so, learned a good deal about web page design. (465 words)

Multiple Cultural Perspectives:
The student explored race and education in multiple courses and contexts. Their studies have led them to an ever-deepening commitment to equity in the classroom and an understanding of what anti-racist teaching practices mean. Their

consideration of race in the United States has not only affected them as an educator, but as a researcher who thinks about their position and about ethical treatment of research participants, and as a person in a racially biased society.

Community Engagement in Learning
The student officially met this requirement through their leadership role in ___, an on-campus student group. Though this is only one of many leadership roles that the student has taken on. They have spent countless hours in classrooms and non-formal settings working with youth. The student has a strong ability to bring what they have learned in the classroom into action.

Division III Evaluations

The Division III is the culminating work of the Hampshire College education, thus Division III evaluations are more likely to be read by students and the outside world than other evaluations. In addition to evaluating the student's product, it should take into account the field in which the student worked as well as their goals for the future. There is a great variety of student projects, accomplishments, and faculty style; thus we expect variation but suggest the following principles:

Content
Evaluations should include both short descriptive comments and robust evaluative comments. We need to describe the student's work but should also highlight the important learning, skills, and abilities of the student.

The following language appears on the first page of the college's transcript; it need NOT be repeated in the evaluation.

> DIVISION III - The final year. Students undertake a major independent project of their own design under the guidance of a faculty committee. Division III includes two advanced educational activities.

> Title: XX
> Passed: (date)

Length
Evaluations should be concise. While we are not recommending a hard cutoff; we strongly suggest that a well-crafted Division III evaluation be in the range of 500 to 1000 words.

Organization
As with other evaluations, one should get a sense of the quality of work very early in the evaluation. The Division III evaluation needs to describe the project as well as

evaluate it, though there is only one box for the evaluation (Chairperson's Comments). You can either separate the description and evaluative comments using headings in the Chairperson's Comments OR integrate the description and evaluative comments in the narrative, but with overarching evaluative comments at start. Here are the two different modes for the same student:

Chairperson's Comments:
Description: This constitutes an evaluation of [the student's] Division III. The student completed a rigorous interdisciplinary Division III that was composed of a number of inter-related parts. The two main products were ____ and ___ in which they ____. The process of completing these works entailed _____, ____, and _____.

Evaluative Comments: It is impressive to see a Division III comprised of multiple components spanning numerous aspects of a field of study where each part is so ambitiously and successfully executed and where the connections among the parts are so well thought out. Throughout their Division III, the student set goals for themself, read far more than they needed to in order to gain an understanding of the larger landscape of their work, explored ideas, changed course with new information, worked hard, reacted positively to feedback, and put in enormous effort.

    OR

Chairperson's Comments
This constitutes an evaluation of [the student's] Division III. They completed an impressive interdisciplinary Division III comprised of multiple components spanning numerous aspects of [the fields of study]. The student completed a rigorous interdisciplinary Division III that was composed of a number of inter-related parts. The two main products were ____ and ___ in which they ____. The process of completing these works entailed _____, ____, and _____.

Each part is ambitiously and successfully executed and the connections among the parts are well thought out. Throughout their Division III, the student set goals for themself, read far more than they needed to in order to gain an understanding of the larger landscape of their work, explored ideas, changed course with new information, worked hard, reacted positively to feedback, and put in enormous effort.

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The following examples of Division III evaluations are provided to show a breadth of style and length.

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<u>Examples:</u>

1. *Throughout their Division III process, the student worked with Professors Stephen Dillon and Helen Scharber. The student fulfilled the advanced educational activities by taking the course "Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Digital Age" and an advanced Division III independent writing workshop.*

For their Division III, The student completed an exceptional 128 page collection of essays, "Of Dogs and Drones: A Narrative Rumination on Colonialism and Agriculture in the US." Combining theoretical, historical, and poetic modes of analysis and inquiry, the student examined the relationship between food, farming, and colonialism in Western Massachusetts and beyond. As the student describes it, they use "history, literature, and critical theory" to create an "interdisciplinary project that weaves personal narrative, theory, and analysis." Their project walks the reader through the neoliberal politics of kale, the colonial legacies embedded in farming practices, the history of slavery and settler-colonialism in Western Massachusetts, and the biopolitics of the development of reservoirs for drinking water. Interwoven with this analysis are lyrical and poetic meditations on being in nature, milking cows, walking a dog, the process of writing, and witnessing the invisible legacies of slavery and colonialism in their everyday life. Their ability to blend the historical and personal, the theoretical and the everyday, is remarkable.

One of the most unique, striking, and brilliant aspects of the student's work is its form. The majority of the project is hand written, exceeds academic discourse, and intentionally refuses the regulations of disciplinary grammar and spelling. As the student writes, "I am not interested in academic polish or linear narrative, in fact I am actively disinterested. This intentional dis-investment has led me to choices in process and product. My work is almost entirely hand written without the use of spelling or grammar editing in an attempt to center content and decenter colonial/academic practices of authentication and standardization. This is, in large, a personal project forcing me to push back on internalized shame around academic performance that I see as connected to my own interpretation of colonial logics." By writing by hand and using their own grammatical and spelling conventions, The student refuses the colonial inheritance embedded in our mundane uses of language, structure, and style. The way the student breaks these rules is subtle, brilliant, and refreshingly original. It also puts into the practice the analysis the project as a whole advances.

The student is quite simply an incredible writer. Their prose is beautiful, incisive, and original. Their writing seamlessly moves between personal reflection, historical analysis, poetry, critical analysis, and the voice of an original theorist. The student is able to truly center their powerful and persuasive voice throughout their work. In addition, they were able to play with style and structure in ways that dramatically added to the insight and power of their work. Both their committee members were struck by the power of their written voice and hope they continue to develop it over the coming years.

In sum, the student is an exceptional and outstanding thinker, writer, and student. It was a true pleasure to work with them and learn from them. Their committee was also struck by their kindness, patience, carefulness, and ability to hold fast to their vision. "Of Dogs and Drones: A Narrative Rumination on Colonialism and Agriculture in the US" constitutes a remarkable, insightful and important contribution into our contemporary moment. It is a solid base for future endeavors and the product of an essential voice to imagining a more livable future. "Of Dogs and Drones: A Narrative Rumination on Colonialism and Agriculture in the US" clearly demonstrates the student's ability to undertake high quality, long-term independent research, and fully satisfies the Division III requirements. We wholeheartedly and enthusiastically recommend that the student be granted the degree of Bachelor of Arts and wish them great success in all of their future endeavors. (637 words)

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2. *For their Division III project, the student designed and developed a music player based on an Arduino microprocessor. The goal of this project was for them to practice and demonstrate their skills designing and implementing both hardware and software computer systems.*

The student did very good work in their Division III project in all separate areas of their project, which included hardware design, software engineering, algorithm analysis and data structures. They correctly analyzed and used complex hardware documentation and designed a system that followed industry standards. The student demonstrated good understanding of software engineering methodologies through the appropriate use of user scenarios, case diagrams, sequence diagrams, and state diagrams. They also did very good work while designing and implementing complicated algorithms, such as a system that crawled segments of a hard disk system and a system that implemented a complicated merge sort algorithm on a number of index files. In addition, the student did good quality work within the field of operating systems by designing and implementing a complex boot-up sequence, and by designing and creating easy to use interface menus.

In addition to this Division III project, during their final year at Hampshire College the student completed two advanced learning activities. The first of these activities was working as a teaching assistant in the course Programming for Science. The second advanced learning activity was a course in Circuits and Systems. The student performance in these two activities is documented in detail elsewhere in their academic transcript.

By doing all of this, at the end of their Division III project the student had delved into the fields of hardware I/O, Operating Systems, data structures, algorithms, and database systems, all directed towards a single device. The student completed all of

these related tasks successfully, thus completing their self-designed Division III project, the last Hampshire College requirement for a Bachelor of Arts. (310 words)

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3. *This is an evaluation of the student's Division III entitled "Urine as Resource: Phosphorus Recovery through Urine Diversion." It involved obtaining and reviewing scholarly literature, gathering and assessing quantitative and qualitative data, and creating opportunities for the community to discuss opportunities to reuse the nutrients available in urine. For their Advanced Learning Activities, the student completed both an advanced Division III seminar, in which they honed their writing and developed new communication skills, and an advanced microbiology course, in which they expanded their understanding of the role microorganisms play in mitigating global problems.*

The student's Division III project was well grounded in the scholarly literature related to phosphorus utilization, its presence in the waste stream, and potential for recovery from urine. It was very well written, revealing intellectual growth, an ability to design and conduct independent work and engage in finding, analyzing and applying academic research skills. The student engaged deeply and personally with this problem, brought their experiences and passion to bear on the issue and, through self-reflection and a seemingly fearless approach, created opportunities for the community to engage in their work. The student excelled in completing their advanced independent project and the advanced learning activities, demonstrating an ability to work efficiently and proficiently while engaging in critical thinking across disciplinary boundaries, and completed their final year at Hampshire College with a high level of commitment, skill, and maturity; furthermore, they demonstrated a high intellectual capacity and passion for research. The committee congratulates the student on their success and we look forward to their continued dedication and work towards a sustainable future.

In their Advanced Independent Project, the student explored the story of phosphorus, which is a nonrenewable but essential nutrient for all life that is wasted through virtually every step of its usage by humans. The main objective of their research was to propose potential alternative solutions to its recapture from the human waste stream, particularly from urine. To accomplish this, they: 1) sought out and reviewed existing literature on wastewater treatment, phosphorus utilization and urine diversion, 2) developed case studies on alternative waste management systems, and 3) interviewed urine donors about their concerns and perceived benefits. The final product is a 115-page document that explores several historical and modern-day case studies of phosphorus recycling through sewage reuse and treatment, along with the associated economic and environmental benefits. It also describes a series of interviews they conducted with urine donors to the Rich Earth Institute (Brattleboro, Vermont), the first community-scale urine-recycling program in the country, where they also interned during the year. The interviews suggest that finding value in what the body

takes in and produces may play an essential a role in building awareness about this issue among the general population. While the piece does not end by offering one solution, it gives broader context to the issues and proposed solutions surrounding phosphorus scarcity. The information from the student's project provides new insights into the challenges to, and stigma associated with, the consideration of urine as a resource to be utilized; it also references historical approaches of other societies to this problem from which we can learn. (521 words)

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Recommendations

In this document, we made suggestions for practices under our current policies. There are a few policy changes that we recommend the faculty charge EPC to discuss or simply vote.

Course evaluation length

Since the range in length of course evaluations makes the transcript difficult for outside readers, with a few graduate programs refusing to look at our transcripts, we suggest a hard cutoff. That is, we suggested course evaluations be no longer than 1200 characters (with spaces) in practice. We recommend a policy that the Hub cut us off at 1250 characters total.

Division I evaluation

We suggest that the Division I evaluation be eliminated. Instead, there would be a description of the program (which already exists on the Hub) followed by a statement that the student has successfully completed the Division I program.

Rationale:
Division I evaluations can potentially serve two purposes: 1) as a guide of the student's strengths and areas for continuing improvement and future academic work; and 2) as a review of a student's performance during their first semesters at Hampshire. We have evidence from conversations with outside readers of our transcripts that when evaluating a student's academic history, they primarily focus on the work completed in later semesters. That is, Division I evaluations could be useful advising tools, but outside readers spend little time on them. In addition, our transcripts include a description of the Division I program followed by course evaluations. Because of all of this, and combined with the fact that internal advising commentaries are available elsewhere, we recommend that Division I advisors spend their time getting students to reflect on their own growth rather than in crafting the Division I evaluation.