

## Suggested Practices for Division II Evaluations

September 2015

This work is the result of faculty from 4 schools meeting in small groups, each building on the work of the prior group. This summary includes ideas from all groups in one document.

### Overarching Ideas:

- There is a tendency for faculty to be descriptive rather than evaluative or to be evaluative only in the most general of terms.
- We noticed some short, vague evaluations and longer detailed, descriptive ones. The evaluations ranged in length from 200 to over 1500 words. Neither extreme serves the potential audiences or the students well.
- As you write please know that a Hampshire College transcript automatically includes the title of the Div 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. You should talk about the general fields of study in the Division II.
- Please keep in mind that there are a number of potential audiences for the Div II evaluation: the student; graduate schools; employers and internship supervisors; scholarship and granting organizations.

### Structure of Evaluation – Suggestions below for each of these components

- Summary
- Chairperson's Comments
- Multiple Cultural Perspectives
- Community Engagement and Learning

### Summary:

The first task of the Division II evaluation is to briefly summarize the concentration. It might begin with boilerplate language such as: At Hampshire, the Division II is the self-designed concentration. In addition to coursework, it may include internships, study abroad, and independent work. Students are asked to engage with the community and consider work through multiple cultural perspectives. [The rest of this paragraph will describe your student's concentration.]

### Chairperson's Comments:

The chairperson's evaluative comments might serve these 4 purposes:

1) Evaluate how well the Div II hangs together – how well did the student synthesize ideas across their experiences to answer their own questions?

- How well do they understand their own progress or the trajectory of their work?
- How well do they reflect on their overall process?

- 2) Summarize the course evaluations to give an overarching sense of how the student mastered the materials and skills necessary to their Division II.
- 3) 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 finding their passions, etc.
- 4) Say how the student is prepared for Div III (briefly, e.g. they have grounding in queer studies, have developed methodologies in oral history, and need to work on substantiating their arguments with the literature).

**We suggest a length of 3-5 paragraphs (400-700 words).**

**As you write, please consider this list of potential evaluation criteria (you would not comment on all of these – consider what is most important to that student’s learning):**

- Critical Thinking Skills
- Locating oneself in a debate (positionality)
- Reflexivity
- Analytical Writing
- Research abilities
- Uses of primary and secondary literature
- Reading skills
- Disciplinary methodology
- Ability to understand/work with theory
- Integrate theory and practice
- Understand broader significance of their work (what is at stake, etc.)
- Independent work ethic
- Time management
- Coursework - how they build on knowledge; how seriously they take it
- Response to feedback
- Self reflection - awareness of strengths and weaknesses
- Collegiality/collaboration
- Appropriate breadth and depth - sustained commitment
- Ability to ask good questions (framing) in class/projects/in Div II
- Passion
- Disciplinary knowledge
- Disciplinary skills
- Ability to revise
- Independent work
- Autonomy

**Multiple Cultural Perspectives-** Describe *how* the student met the requirement (not simply that they did). You can also discuss the degree to which it connects to their concentration or the specific skills and understanding the student has gained.

**Community Engagement and Learning-** Describe what the student did for their CEL-2. You may include evaluative comments if you have access to them from the supervisor.