Provide an example of the program’s most interesting or important assessment finding that demonstrates the program’s success associated with a program learning outcome.

Beyond the student performance data assessed for the annual report, one of the program’s main goals—placing its Ph.D. program-seeking graduates and law school-seeking graduates into top Ph.D. and law programs—was largely achieved. Most of the graduates seeking admission into Ph.D. programs for the fall of 2010 were admitted into a good Ph.D. program with a five-year funding package (one former graduate did not gain admission into the programs to which he applied, although he applied to a very limited number of programs); the one graduate seeking admission into law school was admitted into a top-5 law program. Other students found jobs in major metro areas, including Washington, DC.

Describe an assessment result that indicates an opportunity for improvement and identify the specific actions the program will take to improve student learning.

The POSC and INAF M.A. students performed very well on the research-related measures used in the assessment process. Their performance on the two programs’ rigorous comprehensive exams process, however, continues to show room for improvement. The director of graduate studies for the programs will be conducting a workshop on the comprehensive exams during the fall 2010 semester. In addition, because the variation in student performance in 2009-10, once again, correlated with the receipt of financial aid, the director of graduate studies will continue to work with the Graduate School and the College of Arts and Sciences to increase the amount of financial aid available to POSC and INAF M.A. students.