

EWU Programmatic SLO Assessment

AY 2015-16 and “Closing the Loop” for AY 2014-15

Part I: EWU MURP Programmatic MURP Assessment

Degree/Certificate: Master of Urban and Regional Planning

Major/Option: Urban and Regional Planning

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Part I – Program SLO Assessment Report for 2015-16

- 1. Student Learning Outcome: The student performance or learning outcome as published either in the catalog or elsewhere in your department literature.**

The Masters of Urban and Regional Planning SLO includes “... demonstrate the skills needed to practice planning in a variety of venues in ways consistent with planning ethics.” The first component of this SLO, students gaining proficiency in the skills needed to practice planning in a variety of venues...” is the emphasis for this year’s SLO Assessment. The faculty identified Plan Making as a critical framework for the skills needed for planning practice, and that our program needed to refocus on the basic processes and skills of plan making, the core of our profession.

The key focus for the last three years, since our PAB Accreditation Self-Study and reaccreditation in 2013 has been in response to the Planning Program self-study process and a move to implement a new strategic plan. A Strategic Plan was adopted by the faculty in Spring, 2015, centered on the basic skills and application of professional planning practice for local communities.

Mission: The mission of the Urban and Regional Planning Programs at EWU is to provide quality professional planning education, research, and community service with an emphasis on problem solving at the local level.

Goal 1. Provide a quality applied professional planning education for both graduate and undergraduate students that emphasizes planning action at the local and regional level.

Plan Making, the application of professional level planning practices and techniques, as a renewed focus for the MURP Program. For 2015-16 faculty identified a need to continue to address this key SLO and continue curricula improvement and assessment around Plan Making.

- 2. Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** Indicate whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.

 SLO is met after changes resulting from ongoing assessments, referencing assessment results from the previous year to highlight revisions;
XX SLO is met, but with changes forthcoming;

SLO is met without change required

3. **Strategies and methods:** Description of assessment method and choices, why they were used and how they were implemented.
- The adoption of a common text across eight classes that produced a positive response (Berke et. Al, 2006) was implemented in 2014-15, targeted to have readings from this text incorporated into **seven** classes:

PLAN-500 Planning Practice

PLAN-502 Advanced Community Development

PLAN-503 Research Methods I (Plan Making)

PLAN-504 Research Methods II (Demographic, social and economic analysis)

PLAN-540 Land Use Planning (core text application)

PLAN-506 Planning Methods III (Plan Making project design, inventory and analysis)

PLAN-507 Planning Studio (Plan Making final development, presentation and adoption or action).

We continue to seek to combine PLAN-506 Research Methods III with PLAN-507 Planning Studio to offer one project-based studio experience with adequate time to develop a research framework and data mapping and analysis over two eleven week quarters. The course would complete the project inventory and analysis in PLAN 506 (Fall Quarter) followed by public review and presentation of the final plan for review and adoption by a government agency or publication (PLAN-507, Winter Quarter). This concept for the planning studio was planned the previous year, but was not implemented by the instructor. There will be a different instructor in 2016-17.

- Assessment of following classes based on quality of student group projects and faculty assessment of student competencies related to Plan Making are:
 - PLAN 500 Planning Practice. To emphasize Plan Making this class will incorporate readings from the Berke et al. (2006) text to introduce Plan Making and the Comprehensive Plan. Measurement: This class will utilize readings from Berke et. al. (2006), and assess student knowledge of the Comprehensive Plan elements to be assessed through a class assignment.
 - PLAN-502 Advanced Community Development. Intent is to introduce students to all the basic concepts of Plan Making. Measurement: Ability to collect, analyze & display field data in a community development-planning context.
 - PLAN 503 Planning Methods I. Emphasis on Plan Making through a focus on urban design and graphic presentation skills around Planning Graphics will be incorporated into class research/presentation projects. Three skills will be assessed:
 - Basic mapping and presentation drawing skills (hand drawing);
 - Integration of mapping and presentation skills into one application charrette; and

- An introduction to GIS with an application to integrate GIS maps and photos into a Plan demonstrating data inventory and collection of data in the field, mapping data, and analysis of the data to present alternative actions.
 - c) The following courses are assessed by quality of final presentation project and percentage of students demonstrating competency in presentation skills and Plan Making Processes.
 - i. PLAN 504 Research Methods II. This class will incorporate expanded GIS databases that link census data with spatial analysis in applications incorporated into Demographic, Social and Economic methods research. Measurement: percentage of students demonstrating competency in skills of analysis of integrated spatial data and GIS with data analysis methods and application.
 - ii. PLAN 540 Land Use Planning. Continued use of GIS mapping applications to represent alternative scenarios for text based hypothetical city assessment in relation to critical factors for growth including sustainability, the environment, and the economy. Students will be assessed on the synthesis of data around Plan Making alternatives based on integration of planning processes to generate alternatives (percentage demonstrating competency) and presentation of final projects based on quality of graphics (% demonstrating competency).
 - iii. PLAN-506 Planning Methods III and PLAN-507 Planning Studio. These classes will be linked during Fall and Winter Quarters with a common research plan and project. PLAN-506 will emphasize Plan Making structure for data collection and analysis including development of draft data maps and alternatives plan concepts. PLAN 507 Planning Studio will emphasize development of final report and presentations to the community for implementation/action/publication.
 - a. PLAN-506 will be assessed for application of the Plan Making Process in the final draft presentation and the contributions of each student. Measurement: Quality of Draft Product and Plan Making Process, indicated by percentage of students demonstrating Plan Making competencies.
 - b. PLAN-507 will be assessed based on the final Plan developed and presented based on each student's contributions. Quality of final product in terms of Plan Making and quality of graphics and final presentation indicated by percentage of students demonstrating Plan Making competencies.
4. **Observations gathered from data:** Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #3.
 - a. Findings: Assessment of selected classes based on quality of student group project and faculty assessment of student competencies related to Plan Making are:
 - i. PLAN 500 Planning Practice. Students were to read Berke et Al. (2006) Part I Conceptual Framework for Land Use Planning.
 - Assessment of competency showed the following percentages: Excellent ___, Good ___ %, Fair ___ %, and ___ % Poor. **NO DATA—faculty member did not participate in this assessment.**

- ii. **PLAN-502 Advanced Community Development.** Intent is to introduce students to all the basic concepts of Plan Making. Measurement: Ability to collect, analyze & display field data in a community development-planning context.
 - o Assessment of competency showed the following percentages: Excellent 16.6%, Good 66.8%, Fair 16.6%, and 0% Poor.
- iii. **PLAN 503 Research Methods I: Plan Making and Planning Graphics** were assessed in Student Hand Graphics Maps presented in a class assignment; Wayfinding charrette application for base maps and graphic presentation; and GIS mapping/data collection for advanced Wayfinding group projects.
 - o Excellent 16.6%, Good 66.8%, Fair 16.6%, and 0% Poor.
- iv. **PLAN 504 Research Methods II; Demographic, Social and Economic Analysis.** Expanded GIS application incorporated into Demographic, Social and Economic methods research. Measurement: percentage of students demonstrating competency in skills of analysis of integrated spatial data and GIS with data analysis methods.
 - o Assessment of competency showed the following percentages: Excellent 50%, Good 33%, Fair 17%, and 0% Poor.
- v. **PLAN 540 Land Use Planning.** Utilization of Burke et. Al. (2006) as core text, and continued GIS mapping of data inventory/analysis and alternatives in applications using text based hypothetical city assessment in relation to critical factors for growth including sustainability, the environment, the economy.
 - o Assessment of competency showed the following percentages: Excellent 67%, Good 33%, Fair 0%, and 0% Poor.
- vi. **PLAN-506 Research Methods III and PLAN 507 Planning Studio.** These two planning classes will be combined around one project, with PLAN 506 applying appropriate methods, literature, and project design to Plan Making inventory and analysis including mapping of spatial data. PLAN-507 Planning Studio will emphasize public participation and review and approval of the final Project Plan.
 - o Assessment of competency showed the following percentages: Excellent %, Good %, Fair %, and % Poor. **NO DATA—faculty member did not participate in this assessment.**

b. **Analysis of findings:**

- i. Expansion of course focus and activities around Plan Making is critical for the success of our students as professional planners. Successful applications of Plan Making including appropriate selection and application of tools and techniques following Plan Making processes, as well as development of draft plans and final plans are components of assessment for each class.
- ii. Both the quality of student work and percentage of students who demonstrated competencies with Plan Making skills for the introductory classes, PLAN 500, PLAN 503, and for design/methods classes PLAN 503 and PLAN 540 Land Use Planning indicate success in the introduction and basic skills of Plan Making.

- iii. PLAN 506 and PLAN 507 in one combined Fall and Winter Quarter Plan Making application will reflect the synthesis of learning and demonstration of all Plan Making processes and presentation skills. Program will ensure that assessment is performed via faculty assessment as well as by joint faculty project review as discussed elsewhere in this document.

5. What program changes will be made based on the assessment results?

- a. Describe plans to improve student learning based on assessment findings (e.g., course content, course sequencing, curriculum revision, learning environment or student advising).
 - i. We will continue to expand our efforts in the coming year to fully integrate Plan Making across our MURP curriculum through use of a common text, Burke et. Al. (2006), and expansion of Plan Making including spatial analysis using GIS. There is a need for a basic Plan Making project application in the first quarter through both PLAN-500 and PLAN-503. We will combine the final research methods applications class (PLAN-506) with the final research project (PLAN-507) over two quarters.
 - ii. We will continue to maintain Plan Making and spatial analysis with GIS in PLAN-503 and PLAN 540. Adding additional Plan Making text in Fall 2016 (Jepson & Weitz 2016).
 - iii. We will continue to use PLAN 540 as the integrative application of the Berke et al. (2006) textbook around land use analysis using GIS and presentation graphics.
 - iv. We will fully integrate Plan Making processes and the textbook (Berke et al, 2006) as central to PLAN 506 and PLAN-507. We will continue assessment in these classes during AY 2016/17.
 - v. Will expand Plan Making efforts including GIS applications to PLAN 570 Environmental Planning.
- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.
 - i. We have continued to expand our focus on Plan Making across the curriculum. Assessment of these efforts demonstrates improvement in the quality of planning products in specific classes and an increase in students able to demonstrate competencies in Plan Making.
 - ii. Our long term direction is to provide our MURP students with outstanding competencies in the tools and skills needed in Plan Making as the strength of our undergraduate MURP in Urban and Regional Planning.

6. Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed and an evaluation of the assessment plan/process itself.

- a. Following our PAB Accreditation Self Study (2013-4) our program has developed a Strategic Plan with Vision, Mission and Goals, and we continue to expand our assessment for the program with a focus on Plan Making.

- b. In addition to the efforts identified here, all faculty meet together at the end of each year to assess all students MURP students (first year and second year) according to the areas of knowledge and skills identified by the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB), our accrediting agency. A summary of this assessment is posted on our website for each program under Measures of Success.
- c. We continue to examine assessment tools to better create data that can be integrated into an annual report to our Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) and posted on our website. We will continue to work with the Planning Accreditation Board to expand assessment of student learning and all aspects of our program.
- d. Our planning programs meet annually with a Planning Advisory Committee of 25 professionals in an Annual Program review. Based on our Strategic Plan and an Annual Report presented in advance, the PAC meetings starts with a 4-hour session with faculty, two hours with students, and finishes with an annual assessment/review presented back to the faculty by the PAC along with recommendations for strategies and actions for improvement around our Strategic Plan.
- e. 2015-16 Assessment results indicate that we should increase efforts to ensure that all faculty participate in this SLO assessment process. The fact that the courses with missing data will be taught by a new faculty member should take us a long way towards accomplishing this goal.

NEW: PART II – CLOSING THE LOOP
FOLLOW-UP FROM THE 2014-15 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT

In response to the university's accrediting body, the [Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#), this section has been added. This should be viewed as a follow up to the previous year's findings. In other words, begin with findings from 2014-15, and then describe actions taken during 2015-16 to improve student learning along, provide a brief summary of findings, and describe possible next steps.

PLEASE NOTE: The university also requests that Deans complete a College-Level Synthesis report, which synthesizes which programs/certificates have demonstrated “closing-the-loop” assessments and findings based on the previous year’s assessment report.

Working definition for closing the loop: *Using assessment results to improve student learning as well as pedagogical practices. This is an essential step in the continuous cycle of assessing student learning. It is the collaborative process through which programs use evidence of student learning to gauge the efficacy of collective educational practices, and to identify and implement strategies for improving student learning.” Adapted 8.21.13 from <http://www.hamline.edu/learning-outcomes/closing-loop.html>.*

1. Student Learning Outcome(s) assessed for 2014-15

- a. The assessed Masters of Urban and Regional Planning SLO includes the phrase, “... demonstrate the skills needed to practice planning in a variety of venues in ways consistent with planning ethics.”
- b. The key focus for the last three years has been the first component of this SLO, students gaining proficiency in the skills needed to practice planning in a variety of venues. The faculty identified Plan Making as a critical framework for the skills needed for planning practice, and that our program needed to refocus on the basic processes and skills of plan making, the core of our profession.

2. Strategies implemented during 2015-16 to improve student learning, based on findings of the 2014-15 assessment activities.

- a. Continued implementation of Plan Making in multiple courses
- b. Continued efforts to ensure use of adopted standard text across multiple courses
- c. PLAN 503 was re-conceptualized in service of graduate students obtaining Plan Making skills.
- d. PLAN 504 introduced cutting-edge, cloud-based geospatial data and services for the first time, facilitating increased awareness of the geospatial nature of Plan Making

3. **Summary of results (may include comparative data or narrative; description of changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, etc.): Describe the effect of the changes towards improving student learning and/or the learning environment.**
 - a. Plan Making and its assessment was successfully applied in four of the target 7 courses and the assessment results (as well as other student work and student confidence) reflect positive progress on this front.
 - b. Use of the common text is cementing a strong sense of plan making process and its basis in data and public participation amongst the students.
4. What **further changes to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery**, etc. are projected based on closing-the-loop data, findings and analysis?
 - a. Implement the critique/all-faculty review process in all relevant courses.
 - b. Implement geospatial technology in all relevant courses

References

- Berke, P.R., Godschalk, D.R., Kaiser, J.K. and D.A, Rodriguez. (2006). Urban Land Use Planning, Fifth Edition. Urbana: University of Chicago Press.
- Jepson, E.J., Jr., & Weitz, J. (2016). Fundamentals of Plan Making: Methods and Techniques. NY: Routledge.

Definitions:

1. **Student Learning Outcome:** The student performance or learning objective as published either in the catalog or elsewhere in your department literature.
2. **Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** This checklist informs the reader whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.
3. **Strategies and methods used to gather student performance data,** including assessment instruments used, and a description of how and when the assessments were conducted.
Examples of strategies/methods: embedded test questions in a course or courses, portfolios, in-class activities, standardized test scores, case studies, analysis of written projects, etc.
Additional information could describe the use of rubrics, etc. as part of the assessment process.
4. **Observations gathered from data:** This section includes findings and analyses based on the above strategies and methods, and provides data to substantiate the distinction made in #2.
For that reason this section has been divided into parts (a) and (b) to provide space for both the findings and the analysis of findings.
5. **Program changes based on the assessment results:** This section is where the program lists plans to improve student learning, based on assessment findings, and provides a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.
Programs often find assessment is part of an ongoing process of continual improvement.
6. **Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed.**
Evaluation of the assessment plan and process itself: what worked in the assessment planning and process, what did not, and why.

Some elements of this document have been drawn or adapted from the University of Massachusetts' assessment handbook, "Program-Based Review and Assessment: Tools and Techniques for Program Improvement" (2001). Retrieved from
http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online_handbooks/program_based.pdf