

EWU Programmatic SLO Assessment

AY 2014-15 and “Closing the Loop” for AY 2013-14

Introduction:

Assessment of student learning is an important and integrated part of faculty and programs. As part of ongoing program assessment at Eastern Washington University, each department is asked to report on assessment results for *each* program and *each* certificate for *at least one* Student Learning Outcome (SLO) this year. To comply with accreditation standards, the programs must also demonstrate efforts to “close the loop” in improving student learning and/or the learning environment. Thus, this template has been revised into two parts.

Resources:

Check this site for sample reports (created with the previous year’s template) by EWU programs and other assessment resources: <http://access.ewu.edu/graduate-education/academic-planning/faculty-support/student-learning-assessment/sample-program-slo-assessment-reports>

Additional resources and support are available to:

- 1) Determine whether students can do, know or value program goals upon graduation and to what extent;
- 2) Determine students’ progress through the program, while locating potential bottlenecks, curricular redundancies, and more; and
- 3) Embed assessments in sequenced and meaningful ways that save time.

Contact Dr. Helen Bergland for assistance with assessment in support of student learning and pedagogical approaches: hbergland@ewu.edu or 509.359.4305.

Use this template to report on your program assessment. **Reports are due to your Dean and to Dr. Helen Bergland (hbergland@ewu.edu), Office of Academic Planning, by Nov. 2, 2015.** (Some Deans have elected to move the deadline up.)

Degree/Certificate: Women's & Gender Studies

Major/Option: Women's & Gender Studies

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Date: October 13, 2015

Part I – Program SLO Assessment Report for 2014-15

Part I – for the 2014-15 academic year: Because Deans have been asked to create College-Level Synthesis Reports annually, the template has been slightly modified for a) clarity for Chairs and Directors, and b) a closer fit with what the Deans and Associate Deans are being asked to report.

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

SLO #6: "Students will demonstrate familiarity with the multiplicity of views within feminist scholarship."

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;
 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.

This SLO focuses on the variety of perspectives within feminism. Although it is addressed in many Women's & Gender Studies courses, it is especially relevant within WMST 410: Feminist Theory. This SLO was assessed using a questionnaire given (anonymously) in class toward the end of the term. (The questionnaire is attached.) The questionnaire consisted of an open-ended question asking students to comment on their understanding of the diversity of feminist scholarship, as well as a question in which they were asked to rate (on a scale of 1-5) the extent to which this course contributed to their understanding of the diversity within feminist scholarship. Finally, there was an opportunity to add additional comments.

4. **Observations gathered from data:** Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #3.

a. **Findings:**

17 students responded to the questionnaire. 16 of them answered the open-ended first question by indicating that there are different perspectives within feminism. Of those 16, 11 chose to offer specific examples of these differences. Those who did this generally focused on the different experiences and interests of white hetero women from women of color and lesbian women, though a few also identified particular theories/theorists by name. Only 1 of the 17 students neglected to address the multiplicity of views within feminism. On the numeric second question, 10 students ranked the course 5 (out of 5 possible points) in contributing to their understanding of the diversity within feminism; 6 students ranked it 4 (out of 5); and 1 student ranked it 3 (out of 5). Few students chose to add additional comments, and those who did mainly reiterated their earlier points.

b. **Analysis of findings:**

16 out of 17 students acknowledged that there is a diversity of perspectives within feminist scholarship and attributed that knowledge very much (5 out of 5 points) or pretty much (4 out of 5 points) to this course. Moreover, 11 students were also able to articulate those differences. Although learning and knowledge of this sort is difficult to quantify, it seems that at least 16 out of 17 students met SLO #6: "Students will demonstrate familiarity with the multiplicity of views within feminist scholarship."

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).

There does not seem to be a need to improve student learning as a result of these findings. However, it may be more effective to use a pre-test and post-test with more targeted questions in an effort to assess this SLO more directly in the future.

- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.

Not applicable

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

As mentioned in #5 above, it may be more effective to use a pre-test and post-test with more targeted questions in an effort to address this SLO more directly.

NEW: PART II – CLOSING THE LOOP
FOLLOW-UP FROM THE 2013-14 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 2013-14, and then describe actions taken during 2014-15 to improve student learning along, provide a brief summary of findings, and describe possible next steps.

PLEASE NOTE: The College-Level Synthesis report includes a section asking Deans to summarize 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 2013-14

“Students will analyze connections among societal structures such as gender, race, class, age, and sexuality that contribute to women’s oppressions.”

2. Strategies implemented during 2014-15 to improve student learning, based on findings of the 2013-14 assessment activities.

Need was not indicated for improving student learning. However, improvement in the assessment mechanism was acknowledged, and the questionnaire used in 2014-2015 was an effort to improve our ability to directly assess the relevant SLO.

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.

It was useful to have a numeric response from students using the current assessment questionnaire. While the open-ended responses and narrative description are useful, it is likewise useful to work with a numeric ranking as well.

4. What further changes to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, etc. are projected based on closing-the-loop data, findings and analysis?

Although curricular changes do not seem to be required, increasingly effective assessment strategies are needed in our ongoing effort to track student success within our program.

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