

Annual Assessment Report Summaries 2016-2017

Biology

The AAR 2017-2018 presents data obtained during the 2016-2017 academic year in accordance with YAP 2015-2016. In the 2015-2016 YAP, we proposed that our students' scientific literacy (regarded as the ability to read, analyze, and write scientific communications) can be improved with an intentional effort on instruction in these areas. Our own graduating seniors have acknowledged that a curriculum that further emphasizes scientific literacy would be beneficial. This YAP/AAR represents our continuing efforts to address this aspect of our curriculum by analyzing the proficiency of scientific literacy for our students at all levels of educational

9th, all faculty members of the Economics Department read and evaluated the 14 research papers written by our senior majors for Econ 401. This report summarizes and analyzes the findings from this assessment activity and presents our response to these findings.

Educational Studies

Based on assessment data collected from internal and external measures, we found that Educational Studies student teachers did learn to interpret, use, and respond to K-12 student assessment data. Student teachers were particularly strong in learning goal 3 or offering feedback to their students based off of their performance on an assessment. Although student teachers performed well, we still think this is an area we can strengthen in our curriculum. How we may strengthen this knowledge base and skill set is a topic of ongoing conversations for our department.

Hispanic Studies

In 2016-2017 academic year the Hispanic Studies Department assessed the cultural knowledge of students in our three culture classes using a department-wide direct measure. Preliminary results show that our students are meeting our goals. Hispanic Studies is considering the creation of assessable learning goals for the obligatory study abroad requirement and also creating a signature work project.

Nursing

Two direct measures of student learning used within the School of Nursing are the NCLEX-RN first time pass rates and critical thinking as measured by changes in the pre and post CCTDI scores from first year to graduation. Additional indirect measurement of critical thinking is obtained through survey data.

Although the School of Nursing has an established history of exceeding state and national pass score averages, in 2016 the IWU pass rates simply met the standards (as they did in 2011 and 2012), which represented a significant drop in performance. Because we previously implemented a NCLEX-RN preparatory program for seniors, attention turned to how reliable and valid multiple choice exam questions used in courses were across the nursing curriculum. In response, the School of Nursing Spring 2017 Retreat featured Dr. Lee Schmidt, a test writing expert from Loyola University, and was held January 12, 2017. Dr. Schmidt is an expert on using ParScore data by Scantron (as we use at IWU), so his insights into how to make data driven decisions for item analysis were valuable. The emphasis on improving test writing skills continued in the Fall 2017 retreat held on August 7, 2017 in which NCLEX-RN expert Cathi Kaesburg devoted the day to improving faculty's ability to focus on analysis and application style questions to write NCLEX-RN style questions in individual nursing courses. Developing faculty competency in test writing should improve student preparation and learning for the direct measure of NCLEX-RN performance.

The retreats were attended by all School of Nursing faculty and professional staff. The outcome of the retreats was aimed at developing and implementing reliable and valid multiple choice

In terms of overall points of strength: we liked the diverse literatures that the students drew

specific, sufficiently robust and nuanced. After every professor independently scored all the respective papers, their scores (A to N/A) on various questions were tabulated, assessed and discussed in the meetings. We felt that the student papers, especially the Senior Seminar papers, achieved our stated learning goals, but those who fell short did so because of other challenges and not because of our teaching or assessment strategies. Through this assessment process, we learned that we should keep such guidelines (questions and objectives) in mind while designing our courses and make our students fully aware of our goals. We also thought that we should make a re-assessment of our assessments and evaluate whether the types of courses we offer in our Department-- under certain clusters such as "Textual Studies," "History of Religions," "Critical-Constructive Studies," "Methodological Studies," and "Senior Seminar in Religion" -- are in complete harmony with our stated goals (content knowledge, methodology, research and critical thinking skills, and conceptual understanding and empathy). To this end, we plan to reassess our entire process and figure out a different way to evaluate our goals. We think that we should perhaps begin concentrating on the clusters (e.g., Textual Studies) and assess the learning goals we create for each cluster.

Sociology

In the summer of 2016, the sociology program adopted a new set of learning goals, parsed into 5 essential concepts and 6 essential competencies, detailed in Appendix A. For 2016-2017, we chose to focus on Competency 1: *Apply sociological theories to understand social phenomena*. While we modified our sampling pool and the learning goal that we decided to measure after collecting this data, we still were able to glean useful data about the degree to which our Introductory Sociology course met one of our student learning goals. This prompted both a more robust strategy for the coming year, as well as a strategy to collect assessment data that may inform program-level considerations for the future.

Theatre Arts

At SoTA's annual all school jury event, which takes place every January, every student in the School of Theatre Arts presents work samples to a faculty panel. These panelists evaluate individual students, and critical commentary is shared with each student to guide and enhance individual growth. The Jury is also our most important and critical programmatic assessment event, and provides the faculty with a broad snapshot of student performance. Data is gathered by an individual program assessment designee, and analyzed by the SoTA faculty. It can then be implemented as lessons during the next calendar year to address any identified deficiencies in student learning outcomes and close the loop.

This year a total of 82 students (freshmen through seniors) presented work for assessment. Adjunct Instructor Christopher Connelly was designated to assess the BA, BFA Acting, and BFA Design/Technology degrees, while SoTA Music Coordinator, Sandra Deathos Mee

rubric composite number score was identified for each student. (Students were identified in the recorded data only by an "audition" number.) The individual composite scores were averaged into a class cohort common number. This allowed us (before averaging) to see if there were individuals or groups performing at rates ahead of or behind