Assessment Overview

Discipline/Program Name: GEO    Assessment Year: 2009 Spring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Outcome Type</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Strength of Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrated proficiency in recognizing spatial relationships, understanding geographical concepts and terms, and identifying the world's countries</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Pre-Post Test</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>Weak – misses benchmark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Subjective assessment of one's understanding of spatial relationships, geographical knowledge, and ability to identify countries on a map</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Post Test</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>Weak – misses benchmark.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe the Learning Outcome That You Have Measured

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GE, Discipline or Other</th>
<th>Pre-Post Test, Judged Competition, Embedded Questions, Rubric Graded Essay</th>
<th>Number of Students Assessed</th>
<th># of Years This Outcome Has Been Assessed</th>
<th>Measurement Standard</th>
<th>Report the Results of Your Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong: Exceeds Benchmark</td>
<td>Neutral: Meets Benchmark</td>
<td>Weak: Misses Benchmark</td>
<td>Strong: Exceeds Benchmark</td>
<td>Neutral: Meets Benchmark</td>
<td>Weak: Misses Benchmark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program / Discipline Assessment Report

Program/Discipline: Geography Department
Responsibility: Rosann Poltrone
Author: Mary Carr
Reviewed by Rosann Poltrone

Program/Discipline's Mission Statement:
Geography is a multi-faceted discipline which introduces students to the spatial relationships between the natural environment and human societies. Students will learn to compare and contrast these relationships utilizing critical thinking, writing, oral, analytical, and map reading skills.

In order to improve student learning, all geography students will be exposed to spatial thinking skills.

Program/Discipline's Assessment History:
By using the assessment process as an evaluative technique, how has it previously affected your program's curricula and/or teaching strategies?
Previous assessment cycles have indicated a need for increased higher level thinking skills. All World Regional Geography (GEO 105) tests were modified to utilize fewer multiple-choice questions and emphasize writing and short-answer questions.

By using the assessment process as an evaluative technique, what changes to student learning have been noted?
Given the continued small annual sample, it is difficult to draw significant conclusions. In addition, we continue to observe significant variations in proficiency year to year.

What unintended consequences, if any, have occurred because of the assessment process?
Students continually demonstrate weak map identification skills on the pre-test. A majority of the students are still struggling with this section on the post-test. Several approaches to remedy this deficiency have been discussed and remedial actions undertaken by all geography faculty. Further remedial action may be necessary dependent on the outcome of the 2010 assessment.

Who receives information about your department's assessment and why? (Please note if you plan on altering either of these items for the coming year.)
Our results are included in the strategic plan. They are also shared with GEO adjunct faculty so they may align their course assessment with the department assessment. Finally, students may access the assessment results on the College’s web site.
## Part 1: Previous Academic Year Assessment Summary

**Previous Academic Year: 2008-2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome #: 1</th>
<th>Outcome Title: Knowledge of Geography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome Type:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline/Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome Description:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to demonstrate proficiency in recognizing spatial relationships, understanding geographical concepts and terms, and identifying the world’s countries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Benchmark for success

1) Please specify what percentage of the sample size is expected to meet or exceed your benchmark.
   - Seventy-five percent of the sample size was expected to demonstrate proficiency on the items above.

2) What is the rationale for choosing this measure?
   - This percentage was used for consistency as it had been used in prior years.

### Description of assessment process:

1) What assessment methods were used to measure this outcome (i.e. pre/post test, portfolio review, etc.)?
   - Pre/post testing was the method utilized to assess the above.

2) How do these methods show students are learning?
   - This testing enables evaluation of student proficiency at semester’s end compared with that on day one.

3) What frequency is this outcome being measured (i.e.: each semester, yearly, every other year, etc.) and why?
   - This outcome has been measured annually for several years.

4) How many students made up the sample size?
   - The current student sample was 51, compared with a sample of only 31 last year (a 65% increase).

### Results

What were the results of the assessment process? (List results for each method, if more than one were used.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What did the department learn?

1) How did group performance compare to the benchmark?
   - Of the four class sections assessed, only one group exceeded the established benchmark.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?
   - An overall average proficiency of 64% compares unfavorably with that of the identical assessment completed for the prior year, 2007-2008 (87%). However, it is more in line with the rate for 2006-2007, which was 69%. Given that the results for 2006-2007 were 70.7%, it would seem that the 87% proficiency rate of 2007-2008 may be an outlier. Completion of the 2010 assessment will give the department an indication if the assessment device is sufficient, or if a new, improved assessment device is necessary.

3) If multiple measures were used, how do they compare to each other?
**Student performance summary**

1) Based on the findings, how does the department rate student performance in regards to this outcome (strong, weak, or neutral)?

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of curricula, teaching strategies, and assessment methods?

| Weak. |

Increased emphasis will be placed in the coming year on spatial analysis/synthesis (higher level Bloom’s taxonomy) and map identification. This emphasis was instituted for the current year but, given the above proficiency levels, there is demonstrable need for a more intense effort.

**Outcome #: 2**

**Outcome Title:** Subjective Proficiency Assessment

**Outcome Type** (choose by bolding):

**Discipline/Program**

**Outcome Description:**
Student’s subjective assessment of his/her understanding of spatial relationships, geographical knowledge, and ability to identify countries on a map.

**Benchmark for success**

1) Please specify what percentage of the sample size is expected to meet or exceed your benchmark.
2) What is the rationale for choosing this measure?

Eighty percent of the sample size was anticipated to meet or exceed our benchmark.

This percentage was used for consistency as it has been used in prior years.

**Description of assessment process:**

1) What assessment methods were used to measure this outcome (i.e. pre/post test, portfolio review, etc.)?
2) How do these methods show students are learning?
3) What frequency is this outcome being measured (i.e.: each semester, yearly, every other year, etc.) and why?
4) How many students made up the sample size?

Post testing was the method utilized to evaluate the above.

This method demonstrates students’ perceptions of their capabilities. Such perceptions are accurate to varying degrees. Most often students’ impressions of their capabilities are inflated compared to their performance on the assessment device.

This outcome has been measured annually.

The current student sample was 51, of whom 44 responded to this section of the assessment. Last year the student sample was 31 of whom all but three completed this section.

**Results**

What were the results of the assessment process? (List results for each method, if more than one were used.)

Seventy-three percent of students reported agreeing, or strongly agreeing, that they had attained an overall level of proficiency on the factors measured in Outcome 1 above.

**What did the department learn?**

1) How did group performance compare to the benchmark?
2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?
3) If multiple measures were used, how do they compare to each other?

Weak performance compared to the benchmark.

Last year 83% of students reported proficiency. The decline in proficiency may be attributed to the overall increase in underprepared students enrolled in the course.
1) Based on the findings, how does the department rate student performance in regards to this outcome (strong, weak, or neutral)?

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of curricula, teaching strategies, and assessment methods?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weak.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This finding specifically validated one of the conclusions drawn from Outcome 1 above. The Department had already instituted increased emphasis on spatial analysis/synthesis and map identification based on prior year samples. For 2007-2008, for instance, 67% of students reported confidence in map identification. This year that percentage had dropped to 59%.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part 2: Current Academic Year Assessment Plan**

**Current Academic Year: 2009-2010**

**Intended Learning Outcomes (only include if they differ from those noted in Part 1)**

Instrument will be retained for the coming year with major revisions planned for 2010-2011.

**Assessment Method(s) (only include if they differ from those noted in Part 1)**

As above.

**Benchmarks (only include if they differ from those noted in Part 1)**

As above.

**Have you submitted a separate budget worksheet? (Choose by bolding; for information about this worksheet, please refer to the specific budgeting e-mail sent by the committee chairperson.)**

Yes ($500)

Please submit this report (including both last year's summary and this year's plan) in a Word document to the Program Assessment committee chairperson (Cheyne Bamford: cheyne.bamford@arapahoe.edu). If you have any questions about the process, please contact the chairperson.