### POSSESSION OF A BROAD AND BASIC LEGAL KNOWLEDGE BASE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Author(s)</th>
<th>Joseph Slonka</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Type:</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Description:</td>
<td>Students will submit an assigned research paper that will be assessed to verify that each student is receiving the basic knowledge and training required to graduate from the Paralegal program in a position to be effective and productive in the legal workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Sample Size:</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.</td>
<td>Students will submit an assigned research paper that will be assessed for overall legal knowledge pertaining to legal research, legal analysis and legal writing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?</td>
<td>The students' written paper will exemplify the students' ability to understand the legal problem before them, show their ability to discover the relevant law and cases, and communicate their findings to the client or supervising attorney. This is a very accurate depiction of the skills and knowledge needed to perform in the legal industry, and an accurate picture of the effectiveness of the Paralegal program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Results:</td>
<td>Please select</td>
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</table>
1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?

The department performed above the expected benchmark.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?

The data compares favorable to previous years, and also shows an increase in the student's abilities to research and write on legal issues, exemplifying a strong grasp of basic skills and knowledge.

1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong – exceeds benchmark, neutral – meets benchmark, or weak – misses benchmark)?

Surpassed benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning, administrative and educational support unit planning, and assessment planning?

The assessment will serve to bolster the current focus of the department on independent research and writing for each student, and assist the department to continue more research and writing assignments with feedback to the student.
3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?

More practice in the areas of research and writing for each student will enable each one to build a stronger core of skills required in the legal industry. The more confident students become in their new skills, the more they will want to learn and apply their knowledge to new areas of law, thus making our program more effective and a greater value for the students.

Further Action: Further Action Planned
Describe the action plan: To continue to emphasize the practical aspects of research and legal writing in each class.
Person/ Group responsible for action: Paralegal department
Target Date for implementation of the action: 06/01/2015
Priority: Medium

CRITICAL THINKING – ABILITY TO ANALYZE AND APPLY LAW TO FACT SITUATIONS

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Type:</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Type: Rubric-graded report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Description:</td>
<td>The students will be given an assigned research and writing paper which will be graded for overall analysis and application of relevant legal authority to the given hypothetical situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Sample Size: 31</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.</td>
<td>The benchmark for this measure should reflect a typical Bell-curve in that the expected outcome should show approximately 10% of students at a beginner level, 40% at an acceptable level, 40% at an accomplished level, and 10% at an exemplary level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?</td>
<td>This benchmark comports with the institutions acceptable outcomes for this type of assessment, as has been used in the past.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please select</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Results:</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="https://tk20.arapahoe.edu/campustoolshighered/k12_reports_reportvariables_body.do" alt="Critical Thinking Graph" /></td>
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</table>

1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?

The department performed above the expected benchmark for this assessment.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?

The outcome show a comparable result to previous years, with a slight uptick in the combined results of accomplished + exemplary results, equaling approximately 87% of students.

1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong – exceeds benchmark, neutral – meets benchmark, or weak – misses benchmark)?

Surpassed benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning, administrative and educational support unit?

This assessment shows the department that we are on the right track to increase the overall critical thinking skills of all Paralegal students, and allows us top continue with our current focus on core skills and knowledge.
planning, and assessment planning?

3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?

The assessment results will enable us to verify that our current focus on core skills is having a positive effect on the students, who are learning essential skills for application in the workplace. When the student gains confidence in their core skills, they will seek out more learning and opportunities to apply these skills before leaving the program.

Further Action: Further Action Planned

Describe the action plan: Continue the department focus on core skills and knowledge required in the legal industry.

Person/ Group responsible for action: Paralegal department

Target Date for implementation of the action: 06/01/2015

Priority: Medium

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<tr>
<th>FEEDBACK</th>
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ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY - STUDENT WILL DISPLAY A KNOWLEDGE OF THE ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PARALEGAL PROFESSIONALS.

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<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Type:</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded exam items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Description:</td>
<td>Students will be able to describe ethical rules and apply them correctly to fact situations (hypotheticals) to determine the appropriate ethical course of conduct in legal situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 1 Sample Size:</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.</td>
<td>All students in the Paralegal Program who take PAR 201 (Civil Litigation), which is a required course, will be assessed to determine their level of knowledge of the ethical requirements for Paralegal Professionals. The established benchmarks of students assessed is: 10% for Beginning level, 40% at the Acceptable level, 40% at the Accomplished level, and 10% at the Exemplary level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?</td>
<td>These benchmarks reflect the general percentages used for benchmarks in the Paralegal Program and is based on historical assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measure 2 Type:</td>
<td>Direct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measure 2 Embedded exam items</td>
<td>Embedded exam items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measure 2 Description:</td>
<td>Students will be able to describe ethical rules and apply them correctly to fact situations (hypotheticals) to determine the appropriate ethical course of conduct in legal situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure 2 Sample Size:</td>
<td>34</td>
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1) Describe the benchmark for this measure. Students in the Paralegal Program who take PAR 211 (Legal Research and Writing), which is a required course, were assessed to determine their level of knowledge of the ethical requirements for paralegal professionals. The assessment in the Legal Research and Writing class stresses more analytical thinking than the assessment tool used in the Civil Litigation class above. The established benchmarks are: 10% at the Beginning level, 40% at the Acceptable level, 40% at the Accomplished level, and 10% at the Exemplary level.  

2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark? This benchmark reflects the general percentages used for benchmarks in the Paralegal Program and is based on historical assessments.  

This Learning Outcome was: Met benchmark
1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?

The department compared comparably inline with the assessment benchmarks. The results are presented in a Bell-Chart format, with the majority of students (78%) falling within the Acceptable to Accomplished levels.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?

The Ethics assessment was not reported in 2013 due to the complete loss of data for the assessment due to changing department personnel. The results reported this year are in line with previous reported years which have been included in the results graph for comparison.

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

Each measure reported shows a correlation of success between the classes assessed for ethical knowledge across the curriculum.

1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong – exceeds benchmark, neutral – meets benchmark, or weak – misses benchmark)?

Met benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning,

Even though the assessment results are "met benchmark", given the depth and complexity of legal ethical rules, the department feels that the performance of the program is very strong with 86% of respondents showing an acceptable level of knowledge or better, as well as 52% of students showing an accomplished or exemplary level of knowledge. The department will strive to continue implementing ethical components in every class and promote each instructor to take time to really discuss the paralegal's role and understanding of the rules.
3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?

The department will strive to continue implementing ethical components and instruction in every paralegal class to increase the ethical knowledge and understanding of every student.

Further Action: Further Action Planned

Describe the action plan:
The department will continue to implement ethical instruction in every class to increase the ethical knowledge and understanding of every student.

Person/ Group responsible for action: Paralegal department

Target Date for implementation of the action: 06/01/2015

Priority: Medium

COMMUNICATION - STUDENT WILL DISPLAY WRITTEN COMMUNICATION THAT IS CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE IN A LEGAL SETTING.

Assessment Author(s): Joseph Slonka

Measure 1 Type: Direct

Rubric-graded report

Measure 1 Description:
Students are required to draft a legal memorandum of law to demonstrate the students' understanding of the law and their ability to perform legal analysis (critical thinking), but also demonstrate whether they can communicate their results of the research and analysis in a written format.

1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.

Benchmark for success: 25% of students should be in the Acceptable level, 40% at the Accomplished level, and 25% at the Exemplary level. A subset benchmark is that 65% of the students should be rated in the Accomplished and Exemplary categories.
2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?

This benchmark reflects the general percentages necessary for successful working in a legal environment and is also based upon historical assessment.

Measure 2 Type:

Direct

Rubric-graded report

Measure 2 Description:

Students are required to draft a memorandum of law to demonstrate their understanding of legal analysis (critical thinking), but also to properly cite and give authority for legal propositions and assertions in their papers. Citations are "addresses" used in the legal world to direct others to the exact law or Court case that is being relied upon, and every Paralegal must know proper citation for laws and authority.

1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.

Benchmark for success: 10% in the Beginning level, 40% at the Acceptable level, 40% at the Accomplished level, and 10% at the Exemplary level.

2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?

This benchmark reflects the general percentages used for benchmarks in the Paralegal Program and is based on historical assessment.

This Learning Outcome was: Surpassed benchmark

Measure 1 Results:

Measure 2 Results:
1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?

The department exceeded the benchmark for both critical thinking and communication skills by the students.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?

The data shows a higher concentration of assessment results in the Accomplished and Exemplary areas mainly due to the departments new focus on research and writing for the students. This report will be used as a baseline to continue assessing future progress and results in these two areas.

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

Both areas show that student critical thinking regarding legal problems and solutions, and their ability to communicate those findings to the proper audience, have increased over the past year due to the program making a clear focus on these areas in all classes.

1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong – exceeds benchmark, neutral – meets benchmark, or weak – misses benchmark)?

Surpassed benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning, administrative and educational support unit planning, and assessment planning?

The results of this years' assessment will only strengthen our resolve to increase the department's focus on legal research and writing throughout the curriculum.

3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or

The results will help to bolster the department's advances towards the instructors to include a research and writing element to every Paralegal class, which would give every student more opportunity to gain competency in the basic skills necessary to be successful in the classroom and on the job.
**academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?**

**Further Action:** Further Action Planned

**Describe the action plan:** Involve more classes in the Paralegal curriculum in a research and writing element in their syllabus and schedule.

**Person/ Group responsible for action:** Paralegal department

**Target Date for implementation of the action:** 06/01/2015

**Priority:** Medium