
Program or Service Specific Assessments

Unit: College of Professional Studies

What program or service specific assessment occurred in the current academic year?

Each program implemented at least one objective from their program assessment plans. Specifically:

- The Criminal Justice program assessed critical thinking through one direct measure (a final exam) and a survey of several indirect measures (student perceptions of critical thinking requirements of the degree program).
- The Criminal Forensic Studies program assessed critical thinking through one direct measure (a final exam) and a survey of several indirect measures (student perceptions of critical thinking requirements of the degree program).
- The Legal Studies program assessed written and verbal communication skills through one direct measure (a midterm exam in the capstone course) and a survey of several indirect measures (student perceptions of communication requirements of the degree program for students in that capstone course).
- The MPA program assessed critical thinking skills in a mid-term examination in the course, *Introduction to Public Administration* in March during Spring 05 semester. The program also surveyed alumni on problem-solving and decision-making skills in Spring 04 as part of its self-study for accreditation.
- The Political Science program assessed communication skills, including writing and speaking skills, ability to organize ideas and ability to formulate arguments, in a survey administered in classes during Spring 05 semester.
- The Public Services Management program assessed critical thinking and personal/professional competencies in the course, *Public Services Information Technology* in March of the Spring 05 semester using student's final projects.
- The RHM program assessed critical thinking with a direct measure – a graded portfolio including 10 papers relating senior capstone topics to past RHM courses and textbooks and field experiences. Students were also asked to provide an assessment of their education experience in the RHM program. Graduating students completed an exit interview addressing program assessment.
- The Social Work program assessed critical thinking in the MSW program through one direct measure capstone projects and one indirect measure a survey instrument (Student Evaluation of the MSW Program).
- The Social Work program assessed critical thinking in the HUS program through

one direct measure (final exams/final papers) and one indirect measure a survey instrument (Student Evaluation of Learning in the HUS Program)

How were the results of the assessment used to improve services or programs?

- The Criminal Justice Program as well as the Criminal Forensics Studies program used the data on critical thinking by mandating that all of the syllabi used in the different courses have at least one component that challenges the students to employ their abilities to think in a critical manner. There must be demonstrated activities to address the objective of critical thinking. The students will have the opportunity to demonstrate this ability as they perform course assignments as well as when they take course examinations. The opportunity for critical thinking will also be available in the day- to- day dialogue that takes place in the classroom.
- The Legal Studies program used the data on communication by assessing the current level of activities/projects that allow for the demonstration of both verbal and written communication skills and determining whether or not the current level was optimal for a legal program. The program will be reviewed in order to be certain that students are receiving effective opportunities to develop in terms of effective and persuasive oral and written arguments in the legal profession. The legal studies program will continue to revise courses in order to meet the changing demands in the field. This change will probably be most noticeable in midterm capstone project as this project allows for a comprehensive demonstration of communication skills.
- MPA students in the introductory course scored 88% or higher in an essay question directed at assessing their critical thinking skills. MPA alumni rated their problem-solving and decision-making skills at 4.67 (mean score) on a 5-point scale. These results will be used to reinforce and enhance learning experiences of students in classes.
- Political Science students reported that they “agree” or “mostly agree” that their courses strengthened and improved communication skills. Writing: 85%; Speaking: 80%; Ability to organize ideas: 85%; Ability to formulate arguments: 70%. These results will be used to reinforce and enhance learning experiences of students in classes.
- Public Services Management students in their final projects scored on average of 91% in the project criteria related to critical thinking; directed at their ability to understand how problems and systems inter-relate and students ability to solve problems and make recommendations within the political/cultural/environmental constraints of their professional environment. Students scored an average of 90% in the project criteria related to Personal/ Professional Competencies of applying

theory to practice. These results will be used to reinforce and enhance the learning experiences of students in the areas of critical thinking and personal/professional competencies.

- The RHM program assesses critical thinking through one direct measure and grades portfolio including ten papers linking Senior Capstone learning objectives and topics to past RHM coursework, textbook, RHM articles and required work experiences. As an indirect measure students were asked to provide a written assessment of their educational experience in the RHM program. Graduating seniors completed an exit interview specifically addressing program assessment criteria.
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