

## Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: Undergraduate Major

Department: Women's and Gender Studies

Degree or Certificate Level: B.A.

College/School: CAS

Date (Month/Year): June 2020

Primary Assessment Contact: Dr. Penny Weiss

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? AY2020

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? AY2020

### 1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

Learning Outcome #2 (for the second time): Evaluate central questions, arguments, theories and movements in connection to contemporary global feminist thought and activism.

Learning Outcome #3 (for the second time): Articulate how intersectionality facilitates an analysis of experiences and cultures and shapes feminist approaches to community action and service.

### 2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

The materials used to assess these outcomes included: 1) pre- and post- tests in multiple sections of Introduction to WGS, a course not only required for WGS majors and minors, but one also taken by many as an elective, especially as it satisfies the U.S. diversity requirement; 2) 8 completed portfolios of graduating seniors; and 3) exit interviews conducted at the end of the Spring 2019 semester.

### 3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and include them in/with this report.

Assessment is a group project in WGS, in which all faculty (4 WGS and 2 joint-appointed) participate. We divide the artifacts so that 2-3 people see each. We then discuss not only what we find with regard to each learning outcome, but why, and what to do about it. These conversations are essential to our future work.

### 4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

Learning outcome #2: Our assessment this year indicates that our students are just barely meeting expectations with regard to this Learning Outcome, the most minor improvement from last year. They read and write about some international authors and artists in some elective courses, but the work in their portfolios is still strongly U.S.-based.

Learning outcome #3: Increased student understanding of intersectionality is evident in the pre- and post-tests given in Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies. Every graduating senior's portfolio contained evidence of service and activism work, including papers documenting and reflecting on such work. Those papers indicate that students are working not only in areas affected by gender-based inequalities, but also with inequalities due to race, class, and disability. The faculty believe, based on these materials, that students more than meet expectations. This is an improvement from the last time we assessed #3.

## 5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

Learning outcome #2: We have become acutely aware of the need to greater acquaint our students with transnational feminist theories and movements, and are considering two things: how to make our existing courses, especially the required ones, contain more international voices; and possibly requiring of our majors a course whose primary focus is global feminisms (two now are electives, from which they could choose). We did lose a joint-appointed faculty member this year who was international, due to budget cuts, which strains us even more. Finally, we hope to reword this Learning Outcome, as it contains too much, and even our faculty interpreted it differently.

Learning outcome #3: We will continue to emphasize this concept and encourage students to apply it in their service hours and activism projects. We may also slightly reword this learning outcome.

## 6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

A draft assessment report is shared online with all of the faculty, who suggest any needed corrections. It is then put on our shared drive.

B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

- |   |                                 |  |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies | • Course content                | • Course sequence  |
|   | • Teaching techniques           | • New courses  |
|   | • Improvements in technology    | • Deletion of courses                                    |
|   | • Prerequisites                 | • Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings |
| Changes to the Assessment Plan          | • Student learning outcomes     | • Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)                       |
|   | • Artifacts of student learning | • Data collection methods                                |
|   | • Evaluation process            | • Frequency of data collection                           |

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

We are going to suggest changes to the major and minor to include a required "diversity and identity course."

We are going to modify the learning outcomes for clarity. We are going to modify some of the items on the pre- and post-test in line with a new textbook.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

## 7. Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

We were pleased to have 8 completed portfolios this year. We do now require students to complete the portfolio as part of their Capstone course requirements.

Also, we moved the Capstone to the Fall semesters to give students a chance to further develop the research they complete in the course.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

Through assessment discussions.

**C.** What were the findings of the assessment?

We noted that the most outstanding work by our seniors was preceded by other work in their portfolio on the same or a related topic. They had the chance to develop and refine their thinking and writing, and to approach the subject from multidisciplinary perspectives.

**D.** How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

We need to continue to encourage students to put their work in their portfolio as they complete courses, and to include more reflection on their work.

We will advise our students to build on topics of interest to them in multiple courses over the years they are at SLU.

**IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools and/or revised/updated assessment plans along with this report.**