

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program: **MA Student Personnel Administration** Department: **Higher Education**

Degree or Certificate Level: **Masters** College/School: **School of Education**

Date (Month/Year): **August 2021** Primary Assessment Contact: **Molly Schaller, Program Director**

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? **Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Summer 2021 (2020-2021)**

In what year was the program’s assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? **2020**

1. Student Learning Outcomes

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

Student Learning Outcome 1

Graduates will be able to analyze issues related to student affairs practice using student development, organizational, environmental and social justice theories and professional conceptual frameworks.

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 artifacts directly measuring student learning of analyzing issues related to student affairs practice using student development, organizational, environmental, and social justice theories and professional conceptual frameworks are:

(1) Signature Assignments

- (a) Assessed by instructor of record using rubric (see attached)
- (b) Collected in *EDH 5350 (Student Development Theory)*; *EDH 5600 (Foundations in Higher Education)*; *EDH 5360 (Student Development Theory II)*; and *EDH 5640 (Social Justice and the College Student)*
- (c) All courses are taught in-person on Frost Campus.

(2) Comprehensive Exam Case Study

- (a) Assessed using rubric (see attached)
- (b) *End of Program Exam*, representative of students’ most advanced work

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.

The following artifacts were evaluated using the universal rubric developed by the faculty.

Given SLO 1 listed above, what evaluation process will we use? (What Steps, Who, When)

Comprehensive exams – evaluated by 2 faculty members

EDH 5350 - Student Development Theory – Applications of Student Development Theory Assignment – evaluated by Instructor of Record

EDH 5360 – Student Development Theory II – Final Exam (essay) – evaluated by Instructor of Record

EDH 5600 – Foundations in Higher Education – not completed this year

EDH 5640 – Social Justice and the College Student – Final Paper – evaluated by the Instructor of Record

How might we describe the relationship between our tool, the artifact, and SLO 1?

A rubric was written by the program faculty to cover all of the SPA Master's learning outcomes. Upon completion, faculty assessed the products from their individual courses. There are two key components to this learning outcome. First, students must have the content knowledge from the coursework, or the "theories and professional conceptual frameworks". Second, students must be able to analyze issues of practice utilizing these frameworks. In each class, students engage a specific "theoretical framework" and in all classes students are exposed to "professional conceptual frameworks" for student affairs work in higher education. Products or artifacts in individual courses examine student use of a specific theoretical framework and the comprehensive exam provides evidence of the comprehensive analysis and application of the theories.

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)?

EDH 5350 – Student Development Theory – the product of 5 Master's students were evaluated in the Fall 2020. This course occurred face to face, but many of the students elected to attend via Zoom, including all of the master's students at one point in the semester. Rubric results were a total of 50, 50, 47, 47, and 44 points. The two scores of 50 points were earned by students who had been in the program for some time. The score of 44 was for a student in the first semester. Scores revealed that students may have difficulty: 1) supporting their claims with evidence and 2) showing a depth of understanding of the theory as it applies to their application of theory to practice.

EDH 5360 – Student Development Theory II – the product of 4 Master's students were evaluated in the Spring of 2021. This course occurred face to face. Rubric results were a total of 50, 50, 38 and 37. All of the students were in their second semester of the program Scores revealed that students may have difficulty with use of APA formatting and a comprehensive response to all of the question prompts. Thoroughness of responses was lacking for 2 students.

EDH 5600 – Foundations in Higher Education – our faculty member was not able to report findings before becoming ill this spring.

EDH 5640 – Social Justice and the College Student – the product of 10 Master's students were evaluated in the Spring of 2021. This course occurred via Zoom and included both first year and second year students in the program. Rubric results were 7 students with a score of 50, 3 students with a score of 38. The students with a score of 38 all received the lowest number in the "excellent" category for knowledge and understanding, analysis/inquiry, interpretation and application, integration of practice and presentation with the greatest variance from the strongest students in the areas of knowledge and understanding, analysis/inquiry and interpretation and application.

Comprehensive Exams – Comprehensive exams are read anonymously by two faculty members. Six students completed the comprehensive exams during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 (3 each semester). All students passed the exam. One student scored high enough to be considered "passing with distinction". Interrater reliability was high on 4 of the 6 rubrics. Two rubrics showed a different of more than a 3 point difference by the raters. Final results showed that the students who scored lower all had challenges with synthesizing content and with writing style.

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

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

Learning Gaps: The results indicate that approximately 50% or more of our students do an excellent job of the synthesis of theories and application. However, where there are gaps, students seem to struggle with the written

expression of their knowledge which could suggest a lack of depth of understanding of the ways that the frameworks being taught are integrated in real life contexts.

Strengths: The results indicate that our students seem to be able to grasp and articulate theories for the specific course content areas.

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?

The two faculty who have primary responsibility for the Master's program shared results and conducted the overall analysis. The faculty then shared the results with the remaining faculty in the department (2 others).

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
- Teaching techniques
- Improvements in technology
- Prerequisites

- Course sequence
- New courses
- Deletion of courses
- Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the Assessment Plan

- Student learning outcomes
- Artifacts of student learning
- Evaluation process

- Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
- Data collection methods
- Frequency of data collection

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

Increase the practice in structure writing. We are particularly focused on developing a "critical reflection prompt" that can be used in multiple courses to support students in developing a more disciplined, thorough approach to writing responses.

Change to Assessment – our concern regarding our current assessment approach is that it relies heavily on students' ability to express in writing a depth of synthesis that may hinder our understanding of their actual ability to synthesize. Therefore, we plan to engage in more Universally Designed evaluation of knowledge and content by evaluating. We propose to offer a verbal option for some case study assignments to best understand students' ability to apply theory in context. This would work best for students nearing the end of their program. A first pilot of this approach will take place in the Leadership in Higher Education class in Spring 2021.

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 implemented two new courses. Foundations for Higher Education (EDH 5600) and Leadership in Higher Education (EDH 5470).

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

The course changes have not been fully assessed as all students who graduated in the previous academic year did not take both courses. Spring 2022 comprehensive exam will be the first iteration with all students who

have taken both courses. Exit interviews will also be important to assessing the impact these two courses may have had on the overall student experience, but especially on the question of developing professional competencies as described in Learning Outcome 3.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

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

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

Student Personnel Administration Rubric
NAME

Student Product:

Task description:

Knowledge/Understanding	Excellent (11-15 points)	Competent (6-10 points)	Needs Work (0-5 points)	Comments
Content is comprehensive and thorough	The product is complete and all important aspects of the topic are addressed.	The product is substantially complete, but important aspects of the topic are not addressed.	The product is clearly incomplete with many important aspects of the topic omitted.	Points earned = X.
Analysis/Inquiry	Excellent (11-15 points)	Competent (6-10 points)	Needs Work (0-5 points)	Comments
Conclusions/inferences are logical, and based on the literature and theoretical frameworks related to student development, organizational, environmental and social justice theories and frameworks	The product includes sound and logical analysis that reveals a clear understanding of the relevant issues, and the inferences drawn are clearly supported by or are in opposition to the literature and theoretical frameworks presented.	The product includes analysis that is generally sound, but there are gaps in logic and/or understanding; and the product shows an understanding of relevant issues but lacks depth; connection to or integration of the literature and theoretical frameworks presented is loosely associated with the inferences drawn.	The product includes analysis that is superficial and/or illogical, and shows a lack of understanding of the relevant issues; key issues are misunderstood or omitted; connection to or integration of the literature or theoretical frameworks is substantially omitted.	Points earned = X.

Interpretation and Application	Excellent (8-10 points)	Competent (7-4 points)	Needs Work (0-3 points)	Comments
Literature is interpreted and applied appropriately	The product includes appropriate interpretation and application of literature that is clearly connected to the topic presented.	The product includes discussion/presentation of literature that is applied appropriately but not fully interpreted or associated with the topic presented.	The product includes discussion/presentation of literature that is not interpreted or applied appropriately to the topic presented.	Points earned = X.
Integration in Practice	Excellent (4-5 points)	Competent (3 points)	Needs Work (0-2 points)	Comments
Product shows integration of knowledge and professional competencies into student's practice	The product shows evidence that student has integrated learning of knowledge, development of skills and disposition into their practice.	The product shows evidence that the student has some minor knowledge, skill or dispositional gaps in their practice	The product shows evidence that the student has significant gaps in knowledge, skills or dispositions for effective practice.	Points earned = X.
Presentation	Excellent (4-5 points)	Competent (3 points)	Needs Work (0-2 points)	Comments
Technical writing, APA format, grammar	The product includes a clear thesis; employs APA format; is comprised of focused and coherent paragraphs with correct grammar usage; is 8-10 pages in length excluding the title page.	The product includes a thesis that is ambiguous and/or unfocused; employs APA format with errors; is comprised of paragraphs that occasionally lack focus and/or are frequently incoherent with frequent grammatical errors; is 11 - 15 pages in length excluding the title page.	The product excludes a clear thesis; employs APA format with frequent errors or incorrect format; is comprised of paragraphs that substantially lack focus and/or are substantially incoherent with significant grammatical errors; is less than 8 pages or more than 15 pages in length, excluding the title page. Pages more than 15 will not be read or graded.	Points earned = X.
Totals Points Received				

Other Comments: