

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): MA Leadership and Organizational Development

Department:

College/School: School from Professional Studies

Date: April 2020

Primary Assessment Contact: Steven Winton, PhD

1. Which program student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

The MA LOD program has the following set of learning outcomes (LO's):

LO1: Graduates will be able to apply program-specific knowledge to address practical problems using an ethical, evidence-based framework.

LO2: Graduates will be able to utilize argumentation skills appropriate for a given problem or context.

LO3: Graduates will be able to apply organizational development theory in intervention design.

LO4: Graduates will be able to apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context.

Additionally, the program instituted an assessment process whereby we analyze/review the data for all four LO's each year. We select one or two LO's to focus our efforts. This year we directed our attention on LO3.

2. What data/artifacts of student learning were collected for each assessed outcome? Were Madrid student artifacts included?

Our new assessment protocol integrates data from three sources to evaluate student learning:

1. Instructors complete a formative assessment through a survey at the end of each course. Through the survey, instructors are asked to describe specific artifacts that are related to each LO that is mapped to that course. Instructors then assess competency in this area, as well as potential opportunities for improvement. It is important to note that this process is meant to gather data that is independent of grades given.
2. Faculty mentors complete a summative assessment on each student at the conclusion of their capstone. Mentor's assess the student's performance for each of the learning outcomes.
3. A student assessment of learning outcomes is also completed by students at the end of their degree. This indirect measure asks students to rate the extent they learned and developed on each LO. They also indicate what specific competencies they developed and which they feel they need additional development.

**If we have a Madrid student in the program, then they would be fully admitted into the program.

3. How did you analyze the assessment data? What was the process? Who was involved?

NOTE: If you used rubrics as part of your analysis, please include them in an appendix.

We pulled raw survey data from each of the three surveys administered in Qualtrics. We then

tabulated the quantitative data to provide a high level overview, as well as content analyzed the qualitative data to identify key themes for each LO. A complete report was developed and distributed among key faculty and administrators associated with the program for feedback.

4. What did you learn from the data? Summarize the major findings of your analysis for each assessed outcome.

NOTE: If necessary, include any tables, charts, or graphs in an appendix.

Overall we learned that 85% of our students are satisfied with the quality of the program, 100% feel challenged, and 100% would recommend the program to a friend. Furthermore, 100% of the students feel they developed significantly in each of the four learning outcomes (i.e., rated learning on each LO to a great or moderate extent). A higher percentage of students indicated they learned each of the learning outcomes to a greater extent than the previous year; however, 30% rated learning on LO2 (argumentation skills) at only a moderate level. On the formative survey, instructors rated that only 45% of students demonstrated full achievement of this LO, while on the summative survey instructors noted that 61% of students attained this LO at a high degree of mastery (the highest of all other LOs). Some evidence instructors gave for students who struggled with this LO include: lack of coherence and logic in arguments; poor organization; lack of support/citing their claims.

While 95% of students indicated that they learned a great extent for LO4 (apply leadership competencies), instructors somewhat agreed. On the formative survey, instructors noted that only 52% of students demonstrated full achievement of this LO, although it should be noted that 36% of students partially demonstrated it. Instructors also noted that 15% of students met LO4 at a low degree of mastery in the summative assessment.

The LO rated the lowest among instructors in the summative report was LO3 (OD theory), with 46% of students demonstrating a high degree of mastery and 23% demonstrating a low degree of mastery; whereas the lowest rated LO in the formative assessment was LO1 (utilizing evidence), with 31% demonstrating full achievement and 59% demonstrating partial achievement.

Some evidence instructors gave for students who struggled with these LOs include: LO3-struggle to grasp OD tools and make connections to topics; lack of clarity and application; and LO1-failure to effectively apply course material; lack of logical flow; failure to recognize own biases and fallacious thinking when it came to argument construction.

Please see attached appendix for executive summary of results.

5. How did your analysis inform meaningful change? How did you *use the analyzed data to make or implement recommendations for change* in pedagogy, curriculum design, or your assessment plan?

Past analyses of assessment data were used to inform recent curricular changes, some of which were made to directly influence student learning in LO3. Furthermore, based on this data we intend to make additional changes to improve student learning in each LO.

LO3: Graduates will be able to apply organizational development theory in intervention design.

- Added a new course focused specifically on consultation skills: ORLD 5550 Consulting and Facilitation Skills
- Provided more emphasis on an introduction to OD in ORLD 5000 Organizational Dynamics
- Started a separate Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Organizational Development

6. Did you follow up (“close the loop”) on past assessment work? If so, what did you learn? (*For example, has that curriculum change you made two years ago manifested in improved student learning today, as evidenced in your recent assessment data and analysis?*)

We continue to “close the loop” on past assessment work. For example, as noted above, our new course on consulting skills was driven by student and faculty feedback. It is difficult to comparatively assess how much these changes are impacting student learning as the changes are recent (e.g., most students finishing their capstone had not taken the class). Formative data, however, suggests, there may be more opportunity to improve upon this LO. One possible improvement is to have students take ORLD 5550 prior to starting MRP 2 (the method portion of their capstone proposal).

IMPORTANT: Please submit any revised/updated assessment plans to the University Assessment Coordinator along with this report.

Executive Summary
School for Professional Studies
MA Leadership and Organizational Development Program
Assessment of Learning Outcomes

This report provides insight into the achievement of the four learning outcomes for the Leadership and Organizational Development program at the School for Professional Studies:

1. Graduates will be able to apply program-specific knowledge to address practical problems using an ethical, evidence-based framework.
2. Graduates will be able to utilize argumentation skills appropriate for a given problem or context.
3. Graduates will be able to apply organizational development theory in intervention design.
4. Graduates will be able to apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context.

Three reports detail information from faculty and student perspectives (See pages 5-8 for more detail).

- The Instructor Summative Assessment includes the percentage of students' degree of mastery for each learning objective, and also details the strengths and weaknesses students displayed for each outcome from the instructor's perspective.
- The Instructor Formative Assessment includes identification of a course artifact related to each outcome, strengths and weaknesses in student performance associated with the identified artifact, and suggestions for improving student learning toward the program-level outcome. This report concludes with overall recommendations from faculty for improving student learning in their course and the program overall.
- The Student Assessment includes demographics of students, their ratings of various factors that attracted them to SPS, descriptions of their personal and professional development since joining the program, ratings of competencies that were most useful for their personal and professional goals, and their satisfaction ratings of various program artifacts.

Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

For the Instructor Assessments, some overall conclusions and recommendations for enhancing student learning include:

Overall Conclusions:

- Most weaknesses relate to student writing abilities and APA knowledge, applying OD tools, utilizing sources and instructor feedback, and forming logical arguments.
- Many instructors ask for pre-course training in writing or some sort of writing service, an orientation course, and funding for additional faculty resources.

Recommendations:

- Better align coursework to lay the groundwork for the capstone.
- Provide additional support to implement live sessions or panel discussions.
- Reinforce and practice the use of APA format.
- Better define expectations for course and assignments.
- Find and utilize OD mentors to improve analysis and intervention skills.
- Subscribe SPS to professional research organizations to utilize case studies.
- Implement more case studies and experiential projects to aid in thinking as a scientist-practitioner, balance organizational goals, and assess evidence.
- Bring in more guest speakers or previous students to share lessons learned.
- Emphasize students to incorporate and utilize instructor feedback.

Instructor Summative Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Learning Objective	High degree of mastery (2018, 2019)	Moderate degree of mastery (2018, 2019)	Low degree of mastery (2018, 2019)
<i>Apply organizational development theory in intervention design. (N=13)</i>	41%, 46%	59%, 31%	0, 23%
<i>Apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context. (N=13)</i>	52%, 54%	48%, 31%	0, 15%
<i>Apply program-specific knowledge to address practical problems using an ethical, evidence-based framework. (N=13)</i>	55%, 54%	30%, 38%	15%, 8%
<i>Utilize argumentation skills appropriate for a given problem or context. (N=13)</i>	58%, 61%	36%, 31%	6%, 8%

Learning Objective: *Apply organizational development theory in intervention design*

Strengths:

- Worked with key stakeholders/leadership (8)
- Students were able to understand and apply the OD approach (3)
- Understood role as consultant (2)

Weaknesses:

- Struggled to see role as consultant (4)
- Struggled to remain neutral and keep biases out of project (2)
- Struggled to get key stakeholders involved (2)
- Encountered obstacles out of one's control (e.g., turnover, lack of support and mistrust from leadership) (2)

Learning Objective: *Apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context.*

Strengths:

- Students were competent in applying leadership competencies, consulting competencies, and/or engaging key stakeholders (7)
- Used findings to make recommendations/spark ideas (2)

Weaknesses:

- More tactical than strategic (1); Struggled to see big picture (1)
- Lacked grasp of basic leadership concepts (1)
- Not prepared to navigate internal politics (1)

Learning Objective: *Apply program-specific knowledge to address practical problems using an ethical, evidence-based framework.*

Strengths:

- Utilized focus group with qualitative data analysis (7)
- Developed surveys based on valid measures; ran statistics to analyze data (7)
- Demonstrated mastery in connecting results to recommendations (5)
- Used mixed methods to interpret data and successfully draw conclusions (3)
- Behaved ethically (1)

Weaknesses

- Struggled with analyzing and reporting survey data (4)
- Struggled to connect analysis with recommendations (3)

Learning Objective: *Utilize effective discipline-specific argumentation skills.*

Strengths:

- Presents well (8); Paper was well written (6)
- Accepts feedback (2)

Weaknesses:

- Difficulty organizing/writing the paper or reporting results (5)
- Difficulty building concise argument (3)
- Struggled with format of presentation (2)

Instructor Formative Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Learning Objective	Strengths (% of students who demonstrated <i>full</i> achievement of this outcome)	Weaknesses (% of students who demonstrated <i>partial</i> or <i>no</i> achievement of this outcome)	Ideas for Improvement
<p><i>Apply organizational development theory in intervention design.</i> (2018: N=143; 2019: N=73)</p>	<p>Demonstrated use of OD tools and concepts; ability to write substantive responses; used logical design and strong application of course materials; (2018: 56%; 2019: 59%).</p>	<p>Failed to grasp OD tools and could not make connections to topic; lack of clarity and application; submissions missing required components; numerous errors; (2018: 29%; 2019: 40% / 2018: 13%; 2019: 1%).</p>	<p>Give students more exposure to basic OD topics; provide more feedback on the proposal and improve the feedback process; emphasize the importance of linking practitioner tools and research.</p>
<p><i>Apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context.</i> (2018: N=117; 2019: N=44)</p>	<p>Developed thoughtful, well-supported models; clearly articulated how leadership competencies would be leveraged for the purposes of the needs assessment; applied competencies to own experiences (2018: 64%; 2019: 52%).</p>	<p>Developed models not well-supported; failed to refer to any actual leadership competencies outside of generic discussions; did not think critically; (2018: 21%; 2019: 36% / 2018: 14%; 2019: 11%).</p>	<p>Student motivation, focus, and priorities are key; ensure students are demonstrating learning in lead-up assignments to ensure success on final assignment.</p>
<p><i>Apply program-specific knowledge to address practical problems using an ethical, evidence-based framework.</i> (2018: N=118; 2019: 32)</p>	<p>Effective application of course material relating to both ethics and evidence; sound argumentation and logical flow; recognition of some of the possible issues/pitfalls in completing the project; (2018: 50%; 2019: 31%).</p>	<p>Failure to effectively apply course material; lack of logical flow/choppy sections that didn't hang well together; failure to recognize his/her own biases and fallacious thinking when it came to argument construction; (2018: 35%; 2019: 59% / 2018: 14%; 2019: 0%).</p>	<p>Writing continues to pose a challenge for some. Require students to use SmartThinking for one or more assignments.</p>
<p><i>Utilize argumentation skills appropriate for a given problem or context.</i> (2018: N=260; 2019: 97)</p>	<p>Utilized evidence to support claims and draw conclusions; developed sound arguments with support; well-organized sections; strong APA (2018: 57%; 2019: 45%).</p>	<p>Lack of coherence and logic in arguments; struggled with organization of sections, providing support, and citing their claims; (2018: 29%; 2019: 46% / 2018: 13%; 2019: 8%).</p>	<p>Ask students to directly address how they support their recommendations with evidence; more writing support focused on building an argument and APA; offer a tool for argument mapping; ensure understanding of a literature review.</p>

Student Assessment of Learning Outcomes

To What Extent Students Learned

Learning Objective	To a great extent (2018, 2019)	To a moderate extent (2018, 2019)
<i>Apply organizational development theory in intervention design. (N=20)</i>	73%, 75%	27%, 25%
<i>Apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context. (N=20)</i>	87%, 95%	13%, 5%
<i>Apply program-specific knowledge to address practical problems using an ethical, evidence-based framework.</i>	86%, 90%	14%, 10%
<i>Utilize argumentation skills appropriate for a given problem or context. (2018: N=260; 2019: 97) (N=20)</i>	59%, 70%	41%, 30%

Student Satisfaction

Factors	Very satisfied (2018, 2019)	Somewhat satisfied (2018, 2019)	Moderately satisfied (2018, 2019)	Not at all satisfied (2018, 2019)
The structure of the program (N=20)	73%, 90%	20%, 5%	67%, 5%	0, 0
The subject matter expertise of instructors (N=20)	90%, 95%	6%, 0	4%, 5%	0, 0
The application of course material to your work (N=20)	79%, 85%	21%, 0	0%, 15%	0, 0
Opportunities for professional development (N=20)	62%, 75%	31%, 5%	7%, 20%	0, 0
Overall sense of community (N=20)	28%, 50%	55%, 10%	17%, 35%	0, 5%
Student-to-student interaction in SPS graduate classes (N=20)	72%, 50%	14%, 0	14%, 45%	0, 5%
Faculty-to-student interaction in SPS graduate classes (N=20)	53%, 65%	40%, 10%	7%, 25%	0, 0

Communication with (i.e. availability and responsiveness of) the Program Director. (N=20)	97%, 90%	0%, 5%	3%, 5%	0, 0
The quality of academic advice from the Program Director. (N=20)	97%, 90%	0%, 5%	3%, 5%	0, 0
Your understanding of Saint Louis University's Jesuit mission (N=20)	68%, 50%	26%, 15%	6%, 35%	0, 0
Rigor of graduate classes at SPS (N=20)	67%, 80%	30%, 0	3%, 20%	0, 0
Overall graduate experience at the School for Professional Studies (N=20)	83.33%, 85%	13.33%, 0	3.33%, 15%	0, 0
Overall quality of graduate education at the School for Professional Studies (N=30)	67%, 85%	30%, 0	3%, 15%	0, 0
	Strongly agree (2018, 2019)	Agree (2018, 2019)	Neither agree nor disagree (2018, 2019)	
My graduate degree from SPS has/will help me advance my career (N=20)	50%, 70%	40%, 30%	10%, 0	
Generally, my graduate courses challenged me (N=19)	40%, 74%	56%, 26%	4%, 0	
I would recommend this program to a friend or colleague (N=20)	70%, 90%	23%, 10%	7%, 0	