SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): MA Leadership and Organizational Development

Department:

College/School: School from Professional Studies

Date: April 2019

Primary Assessment Contact: Steven Winton, PhD

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

> The MA LOD program went through academic program review in 2017. The review process helped inform curriculum changes, as well as a revised set of learning outcomes (LO's) for the start of 2017-2018:
>
>> 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 a new, more robust assessment process for the revised curriculum. This is the first year that we have a complete year of data based on the new curriculum and LOs. Our plan is to analyze/review the data for all four LO's each year, but only select one or two LO's to focus our efforts. This year we willl be directing our attention to LO1 and LO2.

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? <u>Summarize</u> 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 97% of our students are satisfied with the quality of the program, 96% feel challenged, and 93% 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); however, 41% rated learning on LO2 (argumentation skills) at only a moderate level. Similarly, instructors reported that students struggled with the argumentation LO. On the formative survey, instructors rated that only 57% of students demonstrated full achievement of this LO, while on the summative survey instructors noted that only 58% of students attained this LO at a high degree of mastery. Some evidence instructors gave for students who struggled with this LO include: lack of coherence and logic in arguments; use of poor-quality sources; ability to cite and paraphrase(APA); and issues writing in appropriate voice. While 86% of students indicated that they learned a great extent for LO1 (utilizing evidence), instructors were less sure. On the formative survey, instructors noted that only 50% of students demonstrated full achievement of this LO, although it should be noted that 35% of students partially demonstrated it. Instructors also noted that 15% of students met LO1 at a low degree of mastery in the summative assessment.
>
> 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 LO1 and LO2. Furthermore, based on this data we intend to make additional changes to improve student learning in each LO.
>
> LO1: Graduates will be able to apply program-specific knowledge to address practical problems using an ethical, evidence-based framework.
> - Revamped our statistical and research method courses
> - Added two new courses around, ORLD 5050 Ethical, Evidence-Based Decision Making and ORLD 5700 Advanced, Evidence-Based Decision Making
> - Embedded a graduate certificate in Evidence-Based Decision Making
>
> LO2: Graduates will be able to utilize argumentation skills appropriate for a given problem or context.
> - Added two new courses around, ORLD 5050 Ethical, Evidence-Based Decision Making and ORLD 5700 Advanced, Evidence-Based Decision Making
> - Embedded a graduate certificate in Evidence-Based Decision Making
> - SPS purchased the online tutorial platform, SmartThinking. SmartThinking is a resource available to every student, in every class. It gives students immediate access to a qualified writing tutor to improve their writing and argumentation.
> - Developing a required orientation/graduate preparation course to be taken prior to enrolling in the first course. This course will have a module on graduate-level writing basics.

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 EBDM certificate and corresponding curricular overhaul were partly driven to help students on both LO1 and LO2. It is difficult to comparatively assess how much these changes are impacting student learning as the changes are recent. Furthermore, we only have one year of baseline data for our new LO's, so we cannot assess improvement yet (i.e., we do not have year-over-year data).

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

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	Moderate degree of mastery	Low degree of mastery
Apply organizational development theory in intervention design. (N=29)	41%	59%	0%
Apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context. (N=29)	52%	48%	0%
Assess evidence to draw reasoned, ethical conclusions. (N=33)	55%	30%	15%
*Utilize effective discipline-specific argumentation skills. (*N=33)	58%	36%	6%

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

Strengths:
- Students did a nice job applying theory and using evidence-based decision making; students were able to understand and apply the OD tools and processes (10)
- Utilized the scientific approach and developed an intervention (4)
- Worked with key stakeholders (2)

Weaknesses:
- Students had difficulty using, implementing, or articulating how they used the OD approach (8)
- Students struggled to get employees involved in the action plan process (1)

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

Strengths:
- Students were competent in applying leadership competencies, consulting competencies, and engaging key stakeholders (10)

Weaknesses:
- Some projects did not allow for the opportunity to demonstrate leadership (5)
- Some students had poor methodology and failed to engage key stakeholder, which interfered with data collection (3)

Learning Objective: *Assess evidence to draw reasoned, ethical conclusions.*

Strengths:
- Used mixed methods to interpret data and successfully draw conclusions (9)
- Demonstrated mastery in drawing conclusions to support the organization (4)
- Utilized focus group with qualitative data analysis (3)
- Developed a survey based on valid measures; ran descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze data (2)
- Analyzed archival data successfully (2)

Weaknesses
- Struggled with analyzing and reporting survey data (4)
- Struggled to connect analysis with recommendations (3)
- Surveys created were insufficient to make recommendations

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

Strengths:
- Paper was well written (13)
- Strong mastery of discipline-specific knowledge and skills (6)
- Critically analyzed the problem and effectively drew conclusions (2)

Weaknesses:
- Difficulty organizing/writing the paper or reporting results (3)
- Difficulty articulating discipline (2)

Instructor Formative Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Learning Objective	Strengths (% of students who demonstrated *full* achievement of this outcome)	Weaknesses (% of students who demonstrated *partial* or *no* achievement of this outcome)	Ideas for Improvement
Apply organizational development theory in intervention design. (N=143)	Demonstrated use of OD tools; ability to write substantive responses; utilized scholarly and practitioner sources; (56%).	Did not distinguish between scholarly and practitioner sources; writing was poor; unable to generate ideas or make connections; (29%, 13%).	More emphasis on key OD concepts at multiple points in the curriculum; utilize an OD professional to aid in OD tools; better connect course work to Action Research capstone.
Apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context. (N=117)	Demonstrated critical thinking through use of research and best practices; made connections between theory and application; made connections to past courses; thoroughly addressed leadership competencies; (64%).	Lacked the use of research; only focused on current course material; writing consisted of broad generalizations and lacked application of competencies and critical thinking; (21%, 14%).	Discuss and define critical thinking before the start of the course; more experiential assignments encouraging application of leadership concepts; strengthen virtual tools and technology.
Assess evidence to draw reasoned, ethical conclusions. (N=118)	Ability to provide sound theoretical, empirical, and logical basis for their argument; integrated appropriate evidence and sources; applied appropriate statistical analysis method; (50%).	Did not specify theoretical, empirical, and logical basis for their argument; lacked use of evidence and integrating course material; poor organization; (35%, 14%).	Emphasize argument construction; enhance assessment of writing; provide resources (e.g., writing tutorial tool) to bolster student writing and APA format.
Utilize effective discipline-specific argumentation skills. (N=260)	Utilized evidence to support claims and draw conclusions; developed well-structured arguments; critiqued and paraphrased sources into own voice; (57%).	Lack of coherence and logic in arguments; use of poor-quality sources; lacked ability to cite and paraphrase; struggled to find own voice; (29%; 13%).	Create a course to focus on writing skills; clearly define expectations in forming an argument; implement a required orientation focusing on information literacy and APA format.

Student Assessment of Learning Outcomes

To What Extent Students Learned

Learning Objective	To a great extent	To a moderate extent
Apply organizational development theory in intervention design. (N=30)	73%	27%
Apply leadership competencies appropriate for a given situation or context. (N=30)	87%	13%
Assess evidence to draw reasoned, ethical conclusions. (N=29)	86%	14%
Utilize effective discipline-specific argumentation skills. (N=29)	59%	41%

Student Satisfaction

Factors	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Moderately satisfied
The structure of the program (N=30)	73%	20%	67%
The subject matter expertise of instructors (N=31)	90%	6%	4%
The application of course material to your work (N=29)	79%	21%	0%
Opportunities for professional development (N=29)	62%	31%	7%
Overall sense of community (N=29)	28%	55%	17%
Student-to-student interaction in SPS graduate classes (N=22)	72%	14%	14%
Faculty-to-student interaction in SPS graduate classes (N=30)	53%	40%	7%
Communication with (i.e. availability and responsiveness of) the Program Director. (N=31)	97%	0%	3%

The quality of academic advice from the Program Director. (N=30)	97%	0%	3%
Your understanding of Saint Louis University's Jesuit mission (N=31)	68%	26%	6%
Rigor of graduate classes at SPS (N=30)	67%	30%	3%
Overall graduate experience at the School for Professional Studies (N=30)	83.33%	13.33%	3.33%
Overall quality of graduate education at the School for Professional Studies (N=30)	67%	30%	3%
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree
My graduate degree from SPS has/will help me advance my career (N=30)	50%	40%	10%
Generally, my graduate courses challenged me (N=25)	40%	56%	4%
I would recommend this program to a friend or colleague (N=30)	70%	23%	7%