Liberal Arts Essentials Course Assessment Report

Course: IDIS 150 Arts and Humanities of Western Culture, Fall 2008

Writing Unit: NO

Instructor: Kaluhiokalani

Methods: Essay, Student Self Evaluation

LAE Category: I.D Understanding the Arts and Humanities of Western Culture

Goal: #1 Muskingum students will develop skills in perception, analysis and expression.

Learning Objective: Students will display an ability to understand how key ideas, concepts, and cultural patterns in Western civilization have evolved over time.

Departmental Perspective (if applicable): n/a

A. Student Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objective or Departmental Perspective</th>
<th>Number and percentage of students exceeding expectations</th>
<th>Number and percentage of students meeting expectations</th>
<th>Number and percentage of students failing to meet expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} Stream of Evidence</td>
<td>8/21 (38%)</td>
<td>9/21 (43%)</td>
<td>4/21 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} Stream of Evidence</td>
<td>7/21 (33.3%)</td>
<td>13/21 (62%)</td>
<td>1/21 (4.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Student work examined

Summarize the tasks used to measure the objective (e.g., exams, research project/paper assignments, presentation, or class assignment) and attach a copy of each (from Departmental assessment instrument or other source).

The “first steam of evidence” statistics were derived from a final-exam essay question that required students to focus on an idea or value prominent in Western culture and show in what ways that idea has changed, modified, or stayed the same over time. Although students were permitted to know the essay question options in advance, they were not allowed notes or other aids during the writing of the exam.

The “second stream” of evidence was taken from a series of self-evaluative questions given as a survey at the end of the semester. Students were asked to judge their own performance in the course and to what degree they felt they were capable, by the end of the semester, of being able to understand how various ideas in Western civilization changed over time.

In short, these two “streams” assessed the same question from the instructor’s and the students’ point of view, giving a rounded evaluation of student progress in the course.
C. Scoring Criteria

Explain the criteria used to evaluate student performance in relation to the learning objective (i.e., what constitutes advanced, proficient, partially proficient, not proficient, etc.) Attach copies of measurement instrument or rubric (Departmental assessment instrument or other source).

The essay was embedded in a larger final exam, and it was worth 10 of 100 points. Furthermore, the essay was scored as follows: 9-10 points corresponded with “exceeding expectations,” 7-8 points corresponded with “meeting expectations,” and 0-6 points corresponded to “failing to meet expectations.” Students’ scores were based on their ability to write clearly and coherently, to synthesize course information, and to demonstrate critical thinking about how important ideas are shaped and modified over time.

For the second stream, students were asked to rate their own comprehension of “great ideas” and how they change over time on a four-point scale, four points being the highest. Four points corresponded with “exceeding expectations,” three points corresponded with “meeting expectations,” and one or two points corresponded with “failing to meet expectations.”

D. Analysis/Reflections on the student learning outcomes

Why do you think students performed as they did in this class? What might be done to improve their performance?

Student performance seemed to correlate with the amount of out-of-class preparation students were willing to dedicate to study in conjunction with how well they assimilated knowledge given during course lectures. The nature of IDIS150 is such that a large amount of information must be absorbed—names, dates, places, images, etc. In many cases, students underestimated the amount of minimal time and effort required to perform well, especially during the early weeks of the semester. Performance might be improved if certain strategies are employed earlier in the semester to encourage students to spend more quality time with the material.

E. Reflections on the assessment process

How might the course-embedded assessment process be improved? Ideas for possible revisions of listed learning objective(s) related to the goal are especially welcome.

As the assessment process for IDIS150 is relatively young, it would be best to accumulate a few semesters worth of data first, at which time a more rounded assessment of the course-embedded assessment can be conducted.