

Blended Degree Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report

Spring 2014

The Reedley College blended degrees were assessed during 2011-2012 as work toward SLO proficiency level was achieved. These assessments were conducted at the designated course level and mapped to both degree and institutional outcomes.

Prior to this assessment, the SLO coordinator gathered key discipline faculty for each of the following blended degrees:

- Fine Arts
- Liberal Arts & Sciences, Arts & Humanities emphasis
- Liberal Arts & Sciences, Natural Sciences emphasis
- Liberal Studies
- Physical Science
- Social Science

Discipline faculty worked efficiently to create degree learning outcomes for these degrees, compromising on statements that their courses could naturally align with. These faculty then mapped their courses to the degree and institutional outcomes. Beginning in fall 2012, the SLO Coordinator began examining the designated course outcomes, synthesizing this information into reporting forms which considered assessment assignments and/or instruments, assessment results, and action plans. To view these reports in their entirety along with mapping documents, follow the following link:

http://scccd.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=41&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D231991%26url%3D

Discipline faculty were also consulted regarding the Liberal Arts and Liberal & Arts and Sciences, American Studies emphasis degree. It was quickly determined that, after reviewing the few number of students earning these degrees, these two degrees were no longer desirable. These degrees were deleted from the College catalog in fall 2012.

The following summarizes the findings for each of the Reedley College blended degrees.

Fine Arts Degree

Outcomes:

1. *Demonstrate progressive technical comprehension and practice of one or more artistic media.*
2. *Demonstrate an aesthetic and intellectual comprehension of culturally diverse works in the visual arts (both traditional and new media) and the performing arts (including music).*

Of the 23 art and music courses that support this degree, most utilized item analyses of exams and quizzes and the direct observation of performances to assess the course outcomes. Assignment-based

rubrics and summative capstone projects were also used. Success rates of 70-90% were reported and therefore the programs concluded that no changes to curriculum, teaching methods, or instructional purchases were needed. The art program instructors did, however, report that they were going to reassess their data collection and communicate more effectively with adjunct faculty to discuss assessment practices.

Liberal Arts & Sciences, Arts & Humanities emphasis

Outcome:

- 1. Critically evaluate the central themes and concepts explored in art, literature, history, music, and philosophy.*

Of the 23 active courses in this degree, there were equal number of assessments based on item analysis of quizzes and exams and assignments utilizing rubrics. Assessment results indicate that students in most courses surpassed the expected outcome of 70% with a success rate of 70-85% or showed improvement from pre to post-tests. History 12 instructors saw an 11-21% increase in pre to post-test responses but were concerned with their overall success rates which fell just below their 70% standard. They pinpointed specific problematic exam questions and will proceed to reassess with revised lecture materiel and exam questions. Several literature course instructors saw that their success scores would have been stronger had they eliminated the FW students, or the students who did not attempt the final exam/paper. They have decided to modify their assessment strategy and re-assess. The Philosophy instructors discovered that while the average scores for some of their exam questions met their 70% success goal, students were either scoring very low or very high to create this average. They are examining their teaching methods and also conducting more assessments.

Liberal Arts & Sciences, Natural Sciences emphasis

Outcomes:

- 1. Demonstrate an understanding of the methodologies of each discipline within the natural and physical sciences.*
- 2. Demonstrate an understanding of basic scientific principles, theories, and laws as well as an awareness of the changing nature of science.*

Of the 39 courses offered during this assessment cycle, the majority (72%) used item analyses of exams and quizzes to assess their student learning outcomes. Direct observation of performances and rubrics were also widely used. Students in Biology and Chemistry classes were highly successful. Pre/post-tests revealed an increase range from 70-87% in correct test answers. This is in light of Chemistry students entering the classes at levels below the national average. Other courses in Geology, Natural Resources, and Physics courses also saw favorable results from 70-98% success on assessments. Still, instructors of these courses saw ways to further improve their courses. Biology 1 instructors determined to revise SLOs for the course to better reflect principles of biology and increase the difficulty of assessment questions. Other Biology courses will incorporate additional teaching methods such as visual animations, provide supplementary study guides, and add a library research lab to familiarize students with scientific literature. Both Biology and Chemistry instructors determined to purchase

additional lab supplies for more hands-on activities. Geology instructors will incorporate more weekly quizzes and hands-on activities. Plant Science courses, also seeing positive outcomes, determined to incorporate several action plans which include, but not limited to, using revised teaching and student evaluation methods to revising the course prerequisites and course outlines of record.

Liberal Studies

Outcome:

1. *Demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills across the broad categories of intellectual heritage, artistic expression, the natural and physical world, human behavior, and health concepts.*

Of the 27 courses in the Liberal Studies degree, nearly all used either item analysis of quizzes and exams and/or rubrics to assess their student learning outcomes. While outcomes assessment were mostly all positive, most discipline instructors still indicated action plans for improvement. Communication instructors determined to engage in professional development activities. Philosophy 2 instructors will use a greater number of examples, especially for students struggling with the identification of fallacies while Philosophy 4 instructors will grade students more stringently. Philosophy 6 will seek students to tutor logic, have students read more in order to improve their ability to think critically about issues, and place old exams on reserve in the library. Art courses met their expected 80% success levels of achievement while Music courses met their expected 70% level and indicated no areas for improvement. While Psychology 2 students did not meet the goal of 70% correctness, the instructors are investigating new methods of evaluating student work.

Physical Science

Outcomes:

1. *Recognize and utilize correctly the terminology of math, statistics, and/or science.*
2. *Analyze and interpret data using quantitative and qualitative methods.*

Of the 10 courses that support this degree, eight relied on item analyses of exams, quizzes, and problem sets assessments. Other assessments included direct observation of performances and capstone projects/final summative performances. Assessment results are mostly positive. Chemistry courses had results close to or above the national averages and had impressive success scores, especially as chemistry students are noted as having entry level skills much lower than the national average. While results were positive, the chemistry faculty planned to use new or revised teaching methods and purchase new equipment or supplies needed for modified student activities to further improve on student success. Math courses also saw positive assessment results with no changes to be implemented. Physics courses saw the highest rates of student success at 86-98%. With a small and eager student population, the physics program determined no action plans are currently needed.

Social Science

Outcomes:

1. *Identify the main characteristics, concepts, ideas, and theories of at least four social science disciplines including Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, Geography, History, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology.*
2. *Use Social Science concepts to analyze cultural, global, political, psychological, and social issues.*

Of the 26 courses offered within the Social Science degree during this assessment cycle, all used item analyses of exams and quizzes to assess the student learning outcomes. Many of the instructors in this degree used pre/post-test assessments to measure their student learning outcomes. While all utilizing this method of assessment saw improvement in students' scores, some courses did not meet their post-test intended mark. To address this, the Psychology instructors, for example, determined to evaluate the quality of the SLO questions to determine their appropriateness and value for indicating achievement. Even those with positive results continued to work toward improvement by making modifications to lecture presentation materials (Political Science) or re-enforcing Keynesian and Classical Economic theories (Economics). Many other instructors also planned to conduct further assessments prior to making any changes to their courses.

Final Note

All course and program learning outcomes are now integrated with program review reports with assessments conducted systematically within a program-determined five-year timeline. Future summary reports on the Reedley College blended degrees will be compiled using GoverNET software. The format will change accordingly.