University Studies Annual Assessment 2016-2017

Portland State University. University Studies Program

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UNIVERSITY STUDIES

PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
annual assessment report 2016 - 2017
University Studies gathers information on students’ learning and experiences in University Studies courses in order to improve our practice and our students’ outcomes. We use surveys, small group discussions, and review of student and course portfolios in our assessment efforts. The tools and methods used to assess student learning are faculty driven and developed. The information gathered is used by individual faculty, faculty teams, program levels and the program as a whole to gauge program effectiveness and inform program decisions.

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UNST GOALS

COMMUNICATION
DIVERSITY OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE
ETHICS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
INQUIRY & CRITICAL THINKING
INQUIRY

During the 16-17 academic year, at the FRINQ level, several new collaborations were initiated, most notably with Orientation and the Think College Inclusion Oregon program. FRINQ faculty have worked toward incorporating universal design for learning in their course. Related to learning outcomes, UNST rated FRINQ ePortfolios related to our Ethics and Social Responsibility learning goal.

At the SINQ level, we continued to collect data about student writing and added a review of student work using our analytic rubric in order to get a more granular view of student writing in SINQ courses.

At the Capstone level, diversity was a continued focus and we worked with an outside diversity consultant to help support student learnings related to the appreciation of human diversity especially in our discipline-specific Capstones.

Across all levels of the program, we continue to use our course evaluations as a way to identify areas that need additional investigation.

INFORMATION

From student responses to UNST course evaluation surveys it is clear that UNST goals are being addressed at all levels of the program. All of the surveys asked students whether they had opportunities to engage in learning related to University Studies goals. Across all items, 75% or more FRINQ, SINQ and Capstone students agreed that they had opportunities to improve their learning and skill in their courses, remaining stable or increasing from last year. In Capstone, student ratings related to critical thinking and diversity were the highest seen in the last six years.

Review of student ePortfolios in FRINQ revealed that students overwhelmingly met our expectations for their learning related to ethics and social responsibility although student performance varied across FRINQ themes.

At the SINQ level where we continued to emphasize writing, we found that the number of students meeting our expectations improved from 40% to 50%. We also identified synthesis of sources as an area in need of attention in our SINQ courses.

The adapted Capstone course portfolio process was well received by faculty. They appreciated the collegial conversations, learning from each other, and the feedback they received from colleagues. Through the scoring part of the review process, we determined that all but three of the participating Capstones this year met our expectations related to diversity and three were judged to be exemplary.

ACTION

In 2017-18, all levels of UNST will focus on incorporating our new diversity, equity, and social justice learning outcome into our curriculum and practices. We are working on providing workshops and training for faculty, adapting our course evaluations, developing a new rubric, and collecting base-line information for the program.

The FRINQ part of the program will continue to emphasize partnerships and collaborations that support student success, including building on programming in the student success HUB. FRINQ will also pilot its first online course in 2017-2018 and will be sure to evaluate that pilot to determine whether to move forward with such offerings in the future.

The SINQ part of the program will continue to focus on writing, including assignment design workshops focused on incorporating synthesis.

Related to student success in online courses, we are exploring actions at the program, faculty and mentor levels. We have piloted mentor outreach to students in online SINQs this summer and will roll that out more broadly this fall. We are developing automated email communication which will help students understand our expectations of them in online courses.

The Capstone program will continue to focus on diversity in its discipline-specific Capstones. It will also focus on the student experience in online Capstones with a qualitative study of those students and continued work with the Faculty in Residence for online community-based learning.
FOCUS OF THE YEAR

The University Studies Program Review, completed in April 2016, informs program priorities, specifically in the areas of outreach and methods of Freshman Inquiry (FRINQ) curriculum delivery.

There has been little to no regular communication and collaboration between the various offices within Advising & Career Services (ACS) or Enrollment Management & Student Affairs (EMSA) and the FRINQ program, making the establishment of communication with these campus partners, and thereby students, an outreach priority. In the spring, we presented to advisors from across campus on the program as well as providing them a FRINQ fact sheet. To expand outreach to new students, building on the success of the previous year, our collaboration with Campus Orientation expanded. In addition to continuing program presentations at New Student Summer Orientation, we provided program information and FRINQ theme descriptions to students before they registered for courses.

Development of the University Studies Student Success Hub (HUB) continued to be the focus of outreach efforts for enrolled students. As such, the HUB began the academic year by welcoming its first Graduate Student Coordinator. The addition of a part-time student coordinator allowed the expansion of programming activities to support student success beyond drop-in advising hours. New partnerships include regular weekly workshops by the Education Abroad office and the Mentors Assisting Peers and Students (MAPS) program. In total, 267 students received assistance at events hosted in the HUB.

Partnering with the Office of Academic Innovation, we began designing and building an online FRINQ course to be piloted in the 2017-18 academic year. This work incorporated, and furthered, previous program work on incorporating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) by integrating UDL principles into both the online course delivery and the course content. Other significant artifacts created as part of the course, are a responsive student resource page and an online course student success diagnostic aimed that provides the student, faculty, and peer mentor information on which aspects of the online course delivery will be most challenging. Both of these tools will be beneficial to all levels of University Studies online courses.

In the fall, FRINQ welcomed the first cohort of six students enrolled through the Think College Inclusion Oregon (TCIO) program (https://www.pdx.edu/career-and-community-studies/). The program also saw successful passage by the Portland State Faculty Senate of the Career and Community Studies Certificate for graduates of the program. Each of these students successfully completed the academic year and were retained in the following fall.

After its piloting in several 2015-16 FRINQ sections, Pebble Pad was introduced to the entire faculty as the program platform of choice for the ePortfolio. Utilizing resources and an assignment template created by a faculty group, as well as the program addition of a Digital Coordinator, 26 faculty adopted Pebble Pad for their student ePortfolio assignment.

TOOLS AND METHODS

FRINQ End-of-year Survey

Purpose: The FRINQ End-of-year Survey asked students to rate their experiences in their FRINQ course. Students responded to questions about the course format, faculty pedagogical practices, and mentor contribution to the course. The results provide information to individual faculty about their course and to the program about students’ overall experience in FRINQ.

Method: During the final three weeks of spring term 2016, FRINQ students completed the End-of-year Survey. This online survey was administered during mentor sessions. 790 students responded to the survey, representing a 72.5% response rate. While this report contains information aggregated at the overall FRINQ level, End-of-year Survey data are available at the theme and course level to help answer specific questions about curricular pilots.

FRINQ ePortfolio Review

Purpose: The FRINQ Portfolio Review process scores student portfolios against rubrics developed to measure student learning related to University Studies goals. The results provide information to faculty teams about student learning in FRINQ themes and to students’ overall learning in FRINQ.

Method: Over the year of a FRINQ course, students develop portfolios representing their work and reflection relating to the four University Studies goals. During spring 2017, students were asked for permission to evaluate their portfolios as part of program assessment for University Studies. 267 student portfolios were randomly selected for review. This year, the portfolio review process focused on the Ethics & Social Responsibility goal, which was assessed using a 6-point rubric, where 6 is a score expected of a graduating senior. Inter-rater reliability for the rubric was 75%. 


SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

FRINQ End-of-term Survey

The majority of students indicated that they had opportunities to develop skills in all four of the University Studies goals in their FRINQ courses. More than 70% of FRINQ students agreed or strongly agreed with all items related to UNST learning goals. Unfortunately, most areas decreased from the previous year; however, the exceptions were “acquire[d] skills in working with others as a member of a team,” “explore[d] issues of diversity”, and “explore[d] ethical issues,” which saw stronger student agreement in the ‘16-‘17 year than the previous year. When considering Ethics and Social Responsibility, student agreement related to this goal has remained relatively stable over the last six years. Most notably, students expressed stronger agreement (86.2%) that their courses addressed issues of diversity in the last two academic years, with students expressing stronger agreement in 2016-2017 than in any of the previous ten years.

Students also generally agreed with statements about their faculty members’ teaching practices. Students were most likely to agree that faculty showed a personal interest in their learning, formed groups to facilitate learning, and used a variety of methods to evaluate student progress (all above 80%). Students were least likely to agree that their FRINQ faculty scheduled coursework in ways that encourage students to stay up-to-date in their work, presented course material clearly, provided helpful feedback, or inspired them to achieve challenging goals (all lower than 70%). The most notable decrease between 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 (5%) was the item related to the way faculty schedule student coursework. It is interesting to note that over the past six years, the pattern of percentages for each variable remain relatively consistent. Meaning the variables, such as those mentioned above, where the program scores highest remain high and those where the program scores lower remain low. And within this pattern, almost without exception, all of the variables in the even years of data are lower than the previous year—ticking up and down in an alternating pattern.

FRINQ ePortfolio Review

81.3 % of FRINQ students met the program learning outcome for the goal of Ethics & Social Responsibility. Using the 6-point Ethics & Social Responsibility rubric, a score of 6 represents program expectations for student achievement at the end of the senior year and a 2 meets program expectations for the end of the freshman year. The overall mean score for FRINQ ePortfolios was 2.70 (n=195). While 18% of students did not meet program expectations, the work of 45.2% of students rated at 3 or above.

Across the 11 FRINQ themes from which student portfolios were sampled, average Ethics & Social Responsibility rubric scores ranged from 1.5 to 3.5. The themes of Human/Nature and Design & Society averaged the lowest scores at 1.5 and 2, respectively, whereas Life Unlimited? and Race & Social Justice averaged scores of 3.4 and 3.5, respectively.
The Freshman Inquiry Learning Experience
Ratings made on a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply course material to improve critical thinking.</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire skills in working with others as a member of a team.</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore issues of diversity such as race; class; gender; sexual orientation; ethnicity.</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>86.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop my speaking skills.</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop skills in expressing myself in writing.</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn how to find and use resources for answering or solving problems.</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn how to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and multiple points of view.</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore ethical issues.</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The Freshman Inquiry Faculty
Ratings made on a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

#### Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>12-13</th>
<th>13-14</th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Displayed a personal interest in students and their learning.</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled course work (class activities; tests; projects) in ways that encouraged students to stay up to date in their work.</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formed teams or discussion groups to facilitate learning.</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made it clear how each topic fit into the course.</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presents course material in a way that is clear and understandable.</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related course material to real life situations.</td>
<td></td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspired students to set and achieve goals which really challenged them.</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked students to share ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own.</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided helpful feedback on tests; reports; projects; etc. to help students improve.</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>69.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged student-faculty interaction outside of class.</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used variety of methods: presentations, class projects, exams, participation, papers, essays to evaluate student progress.</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distribution of 2017 FRINQ ePortfolio Scores
Mean Ethics & Social Responsibility rubric score: 2.70
Percent of portfolios scoring 2 or above: 82.4%
Percent of portfolios scoring 4 or above: 17.2%

**ACTION STEPS**

**Program Focus**

We will continue expanding outreach activities with Advising & Career Services (ACS) and Enrollment Management & Student Affairs (EMSA). The planned implementation of the advising redesign in the 2017-18 academic year threatens existing partnerships such as the Exploratory Studies curriculum, drop-in advising in the HUB, and FRINQ theme ACS Liaisons. We will work with the Advising Pathway Directors to adapt these efforts to the new advising structure as it is implemented.

While Advising experiences program change, we will focus on deepening our collaboration with Orientation. We will build on the 2016 success of student involvement in FRINQ presentations at summer Orientation by expanding the student role through the creation of University Studies Ambassadors who will work as a team to present on University Studies. While many students attend summer orientation on campus, the vast majority of students complete the orientation requirement through an online training. Evaluating and revising this training will be a major program focus of 2017-18. At the same time, we will continue to seek ownership over the University Studies content provided to students in Orientation materials such as the New Student Handbook.

Within University Studies, we will continue developing student support services offered through the HUB by continued funding of the Graduate Student Coordinator as well as pursuing funding for an academic professional to supervise HUB activities and, most importantly, provide program continuity.

Alongside our outreach efforts, we will continue to innovate our curriculum through action-based research. Significant effort will be focused on supporting the introduction and curricular adoption of the University Studies Diversity goal. This goal was revised by the University Studies Council to shift from an emphasis on respect for difference to a critical examination of power and privilege. We will welcome and support the second cohort of Think College Inclusion students and work to open access for them to the Residential Life First-Year Experience sections of FRINQ. Lastly, we will assess the student, peer mentor, and faculty experience and learning outcomes of the
online FRINQ before deciding whether or not to expand the number of these courses in 2019-20.

**FRINQ End-of-Year Survey**

Regarding the End-of-Year Survey, with the exception of one variable (“formed teams or discussion groups to facilitate learning”), over the past six years, there is a general downward trend in each of the other ten variables. Several factors could be contributing to this pattern, such as the level of faculty experience. With several sabbaticals and new hires, there has been significant turnover in the faculty teaching FRINQ courses. It has not been uncommon for a quarter of faculty to be teaching their first FRINQ/University Studies course. Leading to the question: Does faculty level of FRINQ teaching experience impact student experience?

Another possible reason for the level of student evaluation of FRINQ faculty could lie within the coursework. The significant increase in student awareness, over time, of the goal of Respect for the Diversity of Human Experience could indicate that FRINQ faculty are providing curricula that more explicitly challenges student experience with the status quo and violates their expectations.

The third contributing factor to the general decline in student evaluation of faculty could be the students themselves. The End-of-Year Survey questions were last revised by faculty in 2005. During that time, we have transitioned from the end of the millenial to the beginning of the post-millennial generation. Also during that time the average age of students in FRINQ has declined to 18.9. These changes indicate that the questions we ask students about their learning experience may no longer measure what they once did. These questions and issues will be explored, and studied if appropriate, with the Director of Research & Assessment.

**FRINQ ePortfolio Review**

Expanding the number of FRINQ sections using PebblePad as the ePortfolio platform as well as improving the student, mentor, and faculty experience with the platform will continue in 2017-18. We will work with the Director of Research & Assessment to coordinate a faculty group charged with developing a rubric for the new Diversity & Social Justice goal. The 2017-18 University Studies Council will examine and revise, if appropriate, the goal of Ethics & Social Responsibility.
SOPHOMORE INQUIRY
ASSESSMENT

FOCUS OF THE YEAR

During the 16-17 academic year, Sophomore Inquiry (SINQ) and Cluster assessment activities included a few areas of focus:

- The University Studies (UNST) goal of Communication (Writing). We collected student papers for review and reviewed them using both analytic and holistic rubrics in order to investigate specific areas where SINQ students need support in their writing.
- A focus on conversations among SINQ faculty about teaching practices, assessment data, and writing.
- An ongoing conversation about Cluster course alignment.

TOOLS AND METHODS

SINQ End-of-Term Survey

**Purpose:** The SINQ End-of-Term Survey asked students to rate their experiences in their SINQ course. Students responded to questions about the course format, faculty pedagogical practices, and mentor contribution to the course. The results provide information to individual faculty about their course and to the program about students’ overall experience in SINQ.

**Method:** During the final three weeks of each term during the 2016-2017 academic year, SINQ students completed the End-of-Term Survey. This online survey was administered during mentor sessions. 2868 students responded to the survey.

SINQ Paper Review

**Purpose:** The SINQ Paper Review process scored student work against the UNST analytic and holistic writing rubrics. The results provide information to faculty teams and the program more generally about student writing in SINQ.

**Method:** This year, the review process focused on the Communication (Writing) goal. During fall, winter, and spring terms of 2016-2017, 378 student writing samples from 318 students (i.e. there may have been multiple papers from one student) were collected. A random selection of five freshman or sophomore writing samples was collected from 54 SINQ faculty who taught 113 sections of SINQ (out of 173). All 15 SINQ themes were represented in this sample. All SINQ papers were scored with the holistic writing rubric which allows us to compare results from 16-17 to previous years. A subset of papers (181) were scored using an analytic rubric in an attempt to identify specific writing criteria where we could provide additional support to SINQ students.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

**SINQ End-of-Term Survey**

In general, students agreed that they had the opportunities to address all four of the University Studies goals in their SINQ courses. With the exception of the item related to oral communication, more than 75% of SINQ students agreed or strongly agreed with all other items related to UNST learning goals. Related to the UNST learning goal of Ethics & Social Responsibility, SINQ students showed the strongest level of agreement (83.7%) when compared with the last six years. Students showed the least agreement that their course helped them improve oral communication (51.4%), they felt a sense of community with their classmates (65.1%), and that they understood how the course fit into their general education requirements (75%).

Students also generally agreed with statements about their faculty members’ teaching practices. All items related to faculty pedagogy had agreement rates at or above 75%. Students were most likely to agree that faculty created an atmosphere that encouraged active participation (81.1%), displayed a personal interest in students (81%), and scheduled coursework in ways that encouraged students to stay up-to-date on their work (80.5%). One item—related to engaging assignments—reached peak rates of agreement during last academic year (16-17). Across most items, students continued with consistently high rates of agreement or slight decreases. Students’ overall satisfaction with SINQ courses has remained above 75% over the last 5 years.
SINQ Paper Review

With at least one score of 3 from a reviewer representing expectations for writing at a sophomore level, 50% of SINQ student writing samples reached the expectation. That is, 50% of students scored a 2.5 or above, meaning that at least one reviewer scored their writing as a 3. This is a 10% improvement in the proportion of students meeting our expectation when compared to the writing samples from the 15-16 academic year when 40% of SINQ students met our expectations. The mean score for SINQ student writing samples was 2.14. We found evidence of strong writing across SINQ themes and across genres (e.g., brochures, literary analysis, research papers).

In looking at the results of the analytic rubric, students were most able to meet our expectations related to their ability to incorporate attention to context in their writing and in their use of appropriate grammar. Nearly 70% of SINQ students met expectations (a score >2.5) on each of those criteria. Students struggled the most with synthesizing sources in their written work; only 45% of SINQ students met our expectations.

These results inform our understanding of writing at the sophomore level of University Studies and provide direction for writing instruction in the next academic year.
## The Sophomore Inquiry Learning Experience

Ratings made on a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

### Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>12-13</th>
<th>13-14</th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>2016-2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The course provided opportunities to learn to <strong>analyze and critically evaluate</strong> ideas, arguments and multiple points of view.</td>
<td>3885</td>
<td>3406</td>
<td>2794</td>
<td>2650</td>
<td>2905</td>
<td>2868</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course provided opportunities to develop skills in <strong>working with others as a member of a team</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course provided opportunities to <strong>explore issues of diversity</strong> such as race; class; gender; sexual orientation; ethnicity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>78.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course provided opportunities to develop skills in <strong>expressing myself orally</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course provided opportunities to develop skills in <strong>expressing myself in writing</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course provided opportunities to <strong>explore ethical issues and dilemmas</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand how this course fits into my <strong>PSU general education</strong> requirements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was clear how the work from the mentor session connected to the overall course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>79.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt a <strong>sense of community</strong> with my classmates in this course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, I was <strong>satisfied with my experience</strong> in this class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>76.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The Sophomore Inquiry Faculty Ratings
Ratings made on a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

#### Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>12-13</th>
<th>13-14</th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Displayed a personal interest in students and their learning.</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled course work (class activities; tests; projects) in ways which encouraged students to stay up to date in their work.</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>80.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided timely and frequent feedback on test; reports; projects; etc. to help students improve.</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>75.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used a variety of methods: papers; presentations; class projects; exams; etc. to evaluate student progress.</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>77.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly stated the learning objectives for the overall course.</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>79.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly stated the criteria for grading.</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>76.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created an atmosphere that encouraged active student participation.</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used activities and assignments that allowed me to feel personally engaged in my learning.</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>77.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SINQ Writing Review

**Holistic Rubric**
Mean writing rubric score: 2.14.
Percent of portfolios scoring above 2.5 or higher: 50

---

**2017 SINQ Writing Score Distribution**
*Ratings made on a scale of 0-4*

---

**Analytic Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric Score</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Synth</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFLECTION
Overall, it was heartening to see student agreement that ethics and social responsibility was addressed in their SINQ courses at the highest rate it has been in the last six years. Across many other classroom learning experience items, there remains a high level of agreement among students that SINQ courses are addressing UNST learning and pedagogical goals. Students indicated the lowest level of agreement with the item regarding improving their oral communication skills. It is possible that as the program has increased emphasis on written communication we have decreased emphasis on student presentations or other forms of oral communication.

SINQ Writing Review. In the third year of examining SINQ students’ writing, we saw improvement when compared to last year. Although only 50% of students meet our expectation for writing in SINQ courses, that is a 10% improvement over the year before. Importantly, we saw highly rated writing across a variety of genres (brochures, essays, blog posts, research papers).

Information collected through the use of an analytic rubric supplements our understanding of SINQ students' writing abilities. We note that students struggled the most with synthesizing sources and organizing their written work. We will emphasize these areas in our work with SINQ faculty this year.

Student Performance in Online Courses. After discovering that online SINQ courses have lower pass rates than face-to-face courses a few years ago, we held a meeting with online faculty and discussed possible interventions. Online mentors have piloted a program of outreach to individual students. We have developed an online orientation for new online students and an automated email to any student enrolled in an online UNST course which outlines our expectations for students in our online courses. We have seen pass rates increase in our online SINQ courses over the last two years, but need to continue to be diligent in our efforts to support our online students.

ACTION STEPS
Based on the assessment data collected this year, conversations among faculty, and Cluster Coordinator feedback and insight, we propose several action steps for the next year.

Use of Assessment Data:
- Encourage coordinators to continue to discuss results with faculty with a goal that more coordinators are hosting discussions with faculty about SINQ courses.

SINQ Writing:
- Focused discussion about student writing at fall SINQ gathering.
- Collaborate with UNST Writing Coordinator to offer workshop related to teaching students to synthesize information in their written assignments.
- Host workshop for specific SINQ teams so that they can review their common assignment with the intent of strengthening the expectation for and support of our writing expectations.

Student Success in Online SINQs:
- Re-convene online faculty group to review strategies that they have implemented to support online students.
- Study instructor presence in online courses.
- Evaluate online orientation module and develop recommendations for use.

Cluster Course Alignment:
- Conduct pilot of Healthy People/Healthy Places cluster review, including collection of cluster syllabi.
FOCUS OF THE YEAR

Our primary assessment question for 2016-17 was to determine if the faculty development work that we did in 2015-16 addressing diversity and critical thinking had any positive impact on student responses in our end of term course evaluations. Indeed we did see increases in students responding favorably that was diversity issues were addressed in Capstones (matching an all-time high score of 4.21 mean score). Furthermore students reported an all-time high of 4.28 on the analyzing views from multiple view points and a record high of 4.11 to problem solving, both items used to assess our critical thinking goal.

TOOLS AND METHODS

Summative End-of-Term Course Evaluations

**Purpose:** The Capstone Student Experience Survey asked about students’ experiences in UNST Capstone courses as well as instructor pedagogical approaches and course topics. The survey results provide information to individual faculty about their courses and to the program about the overall student experience in Capstones.

**Method:** Students enrolled in Capstone courses complete paper-based course evaluations in class at the end of their course. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 2274 students completed surveys.

Small Group Instructional Diagnostic (SGID)

**Purpose:** Each term, an SGID is conducted in 20% of Capstone courses. These small group feedback sessions are conducted during the middle of the term in order to provide formative feedback to the Capstone faculty.

**Method:** For our face-to-face Capstones an experienced Capstone faculty member goes into a Capstone course taught by a different faculty member and conducts a focus-group like discussion. In our fully on-line Capstones a faculty member with extensive online teaching experience poses the same SGID questions in a digital format and receives written feedback from our on-line students. The SGID seeks student input on the students’ perception of the course, community work, suggestions for improvement and the UNST learning goals. SGID data collected for the 2015-16 academic year were analyzed by an experienced faculty development coordinator.

Capstone Course Portfolio Review

Capstone Course Portfolio Assessment: Diversity

**Purpose:** Capstone course portfolios were developed as a method to assess student learning at the Senior Capstone level of the University Studies program. We developed course-based portfolios for Capstones which include syllabi, assignment instructions, and examples of student work produced in the course, as a way to capture and display the complexity of student learning in a community-based group-focused course. This year’s process built on lessons learned from an approach piloted in AY 2013-14 and rolled out in 2014-15, the dual purposes of which were to engage participating faculty in a summative programmatic assessment that also served as a formative faculty development experience.

**Method:** Capstone instructors were invited to create course portfolios during the 2016-2017 academic year. Sixteen course portfolios were constructed for assessment. This year, in order to engage faculty more fully in the assessment process, we held initial meetings where faculty shared with each other the ways in which they incorporate a focus on critical thinking in their capstones. They also discussed the assignments they would be submitting. The artifacts submitted by the faculty included their course syllabus, the assignment they had chosen to illustrate learning around the diversity goal, and student work samples from that assignment. These portfolios were uploaded to a secure password-protected site for viewing only by participants on the day of review. To assess the course portfolios a group of learning related to diversity that occur in Capstone courses and a scoring guide that included information on scoring portfolios as not meeting expectations, meeting expectations, or exemplary. On the portfolio review day, eleven Capstone faculty members, a Faculty Support Specialist and the Director of Assessment reviewed the portfolios, with each portfolio being scored at least twice. During the review process, faculty provided a quantitative score and brief qualitative responses indicating the strength of the portfolio’s evidence of student engagement with the diversity goal, data which are reviewed only by the Director of Assessment and the Capstone Program Director (and which, in aggregate form, are commented on elsewhere in this report). Further, faculty reviewers offered their colleagues formative feedback through responses to the questions “What stood out to you as a reviewer
of this portfolio, relative to the UNST goal of ‘diversity’?” and “From your knowledge of this Capstone and your reading of this portfolio, what possibilities do you envision for even greater student engagement with the “diversity” goal in future offerings of this course?”

Following an explanation of the process, faculty performed a calibration on a sample portfolio from a prior year’s assessment, discussing their responses to the sample in the large group. When sufficient discussion of the sample work had occurred, 3-4 person groups of faculty were formed, with the Director of Assessment and the Faculty Support Specialist each serving as a facilitator of one group’s process. In these small groups, each faculty member described their course and contextualized student engagement around the goal in the course generally and as evidenced in their selected assignment in particular. After a lunch break, faculty reviewed the portfolios of each of their group members, completing both the summative and formative assessment documents identified above. Portfolios were also reviewed by a faculty member from another group. Following the review of portfolios, the small groups reconvened for the sharing of the formative responses with each faculty member of the group. A large group discussion of the themes revealed in the feedback, a debrief of the process, and the completion of evaluations on the day’s activities rounded out the agenda.

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Capstone Student Experience Questionnaire: Quantitative

Once again, Capstone courses received high scores on student course evaluations—especially on items related to the University Studies goals. In the 2016-2017 academic year, Capstone students were most likely to agree or strongly agree that their community work helped them better understand Capstone course content (90.2%), they had the opportunity to engage with students from different fields of specialization (90.6%), and they were able to connect course content to real life situations (88.4%). Eight items reached peak rates of agreement in last academic year (16-17) including students addressing issues of diversity, students improving their ability to analyze views from multiple perspectives, and students improving their ability to solve problems; however, aggregate scores dipped slightly in some instructional areas, but none of these dips were statistically significant. The slight decreases pertained to clear grading criteria (81.6%) and outside of class interaction with faculty (82.2%).

Capstone Student Experience Questionnaire: Qualitative

Two primary questions were presented to students in the Capstone final course evaluation: (1) “What was your most important learning?” and (2) “What could be improved in the course?” For this qualitative analysis, 200 comments were randomly selected from Summer 2016, Fall 2016, and Winter 2017 terms to assess students’ learning and suggestions for Capstones. The Creswell (1994) method was used to analyze the qualitative data and to draw conclusions and confirm findings.

Comments on “Important Learning”

From the random sample of 200 responses to the question “What was your most important learning?” one dominant theme and five lesser themes emerged (with some responses falling under more than one of the themes). The themes themselves, along with the number of student responses connected to those themes, are indicated below:

1. Engagement in community-based learning, with emphasis on hands-on and direct service (53)
2. Group work and a sense of community (18)
3. Deep learning related to the theme/content of the Capstone, with emphasis on new knowledge acquisition and skill development (16)
4. Diversity (inside and outside the classroom) (16)
5. Instructor expertise and/or approachability (15)
6. Skills for career and life (12)

In addition to these themes, analysis revealed another 10 themes embedded in students’ responses—all of which were represented in fewer than 10 evaluations. In other words, students overwhelmingly indicated this year that the course itself, with its emphasis on experiential learning through service with a partnering community organization, provided their most important learnings in the course.

This year’s analysis reaffirmed the value that an immersive experience in a vibrant learning environment provides to students. Again, students reported learnings that are fundamentally relational in nature, resting in a dynamic interchange between and among students, faculty, and community partners and their constituents. That students recognized, through their comments, both the acquisition of skills valuable for their lives and careers and the capacity for working in groups across difference, reflects that Capstones offer...
students the opportunity to grow both as persons and in the expertise they will need for success in the future.

Comments on Areas for Course Improvement
In response to the question “What could be improved about the course?” by far the greatest number of respondents, again, indicated that the course needed no improvement. Five additional noteworthy themes emerged from the responses to this question:

1. No suggestion for improvements to this course (88)
2. Strengthen partnership with community partner (including orientation for Capstone students) (15)
3. Provide more structure, including clear grading criteria and assignment expectations (15)
4. Improved pacing of course activities and assignments (12)
5. Less focus on content and more focus on community-based learning activities (11)
6. Improve content and facilitation in the classroom (10)

Most of these themes echo those from previous assessments. When students do have suggestions for course improvement, these often reflect students’ desire for more structure in these deeply dynamic courses with their many moving parts (involving students, faculty, community organizations, and the constituents of those organizations).

Two new themes to emerge are to “strengthen partnership with community partner (including orientation for Capstone students)” and to “improve content and facilitation in the classroom.” With regard to the former theme, the analysts of these data are heartened, as this may indicate evolving and deepening community partnerships that offer students sufficiently intensive experiences that they desire greater preparation for them. As to the latter, faculty support specialists working with Capstone faculty will communicate opportunities for Capstone faculty to develop their skills as facilitators and curriculum designers through events that are already planned for the upcoming academic year (including a multi-session training in facilitation, a “Radical Empathy” workshop, and a UNST-wide focus on supporting faculty to teach effectively around the new UNST diversity goal, beginning with the Fall Capstone Faculty Workshop and culminating in the Spring Retreat. Support around these areas identified by students for improvement will also happen in 1:1 meetings with faculty support specialists and seasoned Capstone faculty members throughout the year.

Small Group Instructional Diagnostic (SGID)
An analysis of the reports from 33 SGIDs revealed themes consistent with those of previous years and with those from other data sources. In response to the questions “What aspects of this course are helping you a) understand the course content in this Capstone and b) prepare for your community work?” students across courses identify these 5 themes most consistently: 1) connection to real community issues and community organizations; 2) strong resources (books, articles, videos, short lectures); 3) the teacher (availability and passion for the topic); 4) discussion work; and 5) group work.

In response to the questions “In general, what could be changed to improve this course?” and “What specific suggestions do you have to bring about those changes?” students name 3 areas for change that would improve their Capstones: 1) additional clarity in expectations and guidelines (for grades, assignments, and larger learning in the course); 2) content organization (in assignments and D2L; and regarding the syllabus and weekly content); and 3) group work (especially more group work time and smaller groups).

As in past years, additional themes around desired course improvement, mostly related to the BA 495/Business Strategies Capstone, emerged, namely 1) more hands-on instruction and less lecture; 2) improved/greater engagement with the community partner; and 3) fewer tests and quizzes. As in previous years, calls for greater structure and organization in courses, for greater coherence between course materials and community work (and less class-based work in general), and for greater access to community partners were disproportionately present in the SGIDs connected to BA 495/Business Strategies. The fact that “connection to real community issues and community organizations” was the top theme reported by students as contributing to their learning across courses, while “improved/greater engagement with the community partner” was identified by BA 495 students as needing improvement, signals the disconnect present in these courses.

The faculty analyzing these data believe that, in general, offering more Universal Design for Learning (UDL) workshops for organization both of assignments and for materials in D2L would be helpful for faculty. The cohort that met and worked together during AY 2016-17 was quite productive, supporting individual faculty members to make significant and substantial changes to their course materials, activities, and assignments to increase accessibility for the diversity of learners represented in every learning community. As with other faculty support efforts in UNST, this relational opportunity to evolve and hone one’s
teaching practice resulted in meaningful work being accomplished for our students and in deepening relationships for faculty in the program.

Beyond UDL workshops, additional forums for faculty to engage in the workshopping of syllabi and assignments will also likely be useful. The inclusion of BA 495 faculty would be of great benefit to those faculty, in particular, as they are generally less likely to participate in other UNST-sponsored faculty support events. Contact with faculty teaching the UNST 421 Capstone may help acculturate BA 495 faculty to new ways of conceptualizing and building community partnerships and designing and delivering Capstone courses.

Capstone Course Portfolio Ratings:
Capstone Course Portfolio Assessment: Diversity

- The course portfolios demonstrated that by and large students are given opportunities to engage in and demonstrate learning related to diversity. All but three courses were rated as meeting our expectations or and three out of the sixteen were rated exemplary. Three course portfolios did not provide evidence that our goals related to diversity were being met.
- Reviewers rated student work samples as exemplary more often (4 courses) than they rated syllabi, assignment instructions, or the overall course as exemplary.
- Courses that were rated exemplary provided students with experiences that deepened their engagement with and understanding of the diversity of human experience. These courses had an explicit focus on social justice and addressed diversity as a core component of the course through readings, activities, and direct work in the community.
The Senior Capstone Learning Experience
Ratings made on a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>12-13</th>
<th>13-14</th>
<th>14-15</th>
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<td>2678</td>
<td>2267</td>
<td>2661</td>
<td>2862</td>
<td>2513</td>
<td>2274</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The community work I did helped me to better understand the course content in this Capstone.

I feel that the community work I did through this course benefited the community.

I felt a personal responsibility to meet the needs of the community partner of this course.

I was already volunteering in the community before taking this course.

I improved my ability to solve problems in this course.

This course helped me understand others who are different from me.

My participation in this Capstone helped me to connect what I learned to real life situations.

This course enhanced my communication skills (writing, public speaking, etc.).

I will continue to volunteer or participate in the community after this course.

This course enhanced my ability to work with others in a team.
Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>12-13</th>
<th>13-14</th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
<th>2274</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In this course I improved my ability to analyze views from multiple viewpoints.</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This course explored issues of diversity (such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation).</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe this course deepened my understanding of political issues.</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The syllabus clearly described how the course content connected to the community work.</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe this course deepened my understanding of local social issues.</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I now have a better understanding of how to make a difference in my community.</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had the opportunity to apply skills and knowledge gained from my major.</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had the opportunity to engage with students from different fields of specialization.</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = highest percent
### The Senior Capstone Faculty
Ratings made on a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

#### Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>12-13</th>
<th>13-14</th>
<th>14-15</th>
<th>15-16</th>
<th>16-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Showed a personal interest in my learning.</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>91.4</td>
<td><strong>89.3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled work at an appropriate pace.</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td><strong>88.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide clear instructions for assignments.</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td><strong>82.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created an atmosphere that encouraged active participation.</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td><strong>89.3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presented course material clearly.</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td><strong>84.9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created an atmosphere that helped me feel personally engaged in my learning.</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td><strong>86.1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided helpful feedback.</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td><strong>82.6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related course material to real-life situations.</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td><strong>89.1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Encouraged interaction outside of class.</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td><strong>82.2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided clear grading criteria.</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td><strong>81.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Senior Capstone Course Portfolio Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio Rating</th>
<th>Number of Portfolios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate (the portfolio did not show that the course provided students with clear opportunities to demonstrate their learning related to ethics and social responsibility)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate (the portfolio showed that the course provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning related to ethics and social responsibility)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary (the course syllabi, assignments, and activities consistently and clearly provided opportunities for students to demonstrate learning related to ethics and social responsibility. This course is an example for others)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portfolio element</th>
<th>Number exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment instructions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student work samples</td>
<td>4</td>
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REFLECTION

Overall the Capstone Program has shown stable scores in our course evaluations as they consistently address the University Studies goals and reflect the best practices in the field of community based learning by engaging students in meaningful work that benefits the community while deepening students’ understanding of course content. Through the qualitative analysis students affirmed that they are indeed transformed through relationships with peers, community members and faculty in these courses. The faculty development work done in 2015-16 seemed to have facilitated positive gains related to our diversity and critical thinking skills. Our faculty development support team will work individually with faculty who struggled to provide clear assignments and/or who had sluggish scores on essential elements of their Capstone course.

ACTION STEPS

The Capstone Office will continue to work with diversity consultants to further support faculty’s capacity to improve our students’ experience reflecting on diversity issues related to the course content and community work in discipline-specific Capstones. This work will be especially important as Capstones Program prepares faculty and students to address the new UNST Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice learning goal. This new goal challenges all of us to move from passively “appreciating diversity” to actually exploring identity issues and analyzing power dynamics with the intent of building a more just community. The Capstone Office will also continue to work with the University Studies Digital Coordinator to address this new learning goal in our on-line Capstones.

As a result of the new UNST Diversity, Equity and Social justice goal, the Capstone Program expanded the qualitative portion of our course evaluations to include two new open ended questions related to this new goal:

1) What were your most significant learnings in this Capstone related to the UNST Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice Learning Goal?

2) What assignments, discussions, readings, and/or course activities were most impactful in deepening your learning about the UNST Diversity, Equity and Social Justice Learning Goal?

We will collect that data throughout the three terms of the 17-18 academic year and will analyze that data over the summer of 2018 to document what students are learning about this goal in their Capstone. In addition the data may inform us of specific wording for future quantitative questions that we pose in our Capstone course evaluations.
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