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# University Studies Annual Assessment 2018-2019

Portland State University. University Studies Program

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# PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

## assessment report 2018 - 2019

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**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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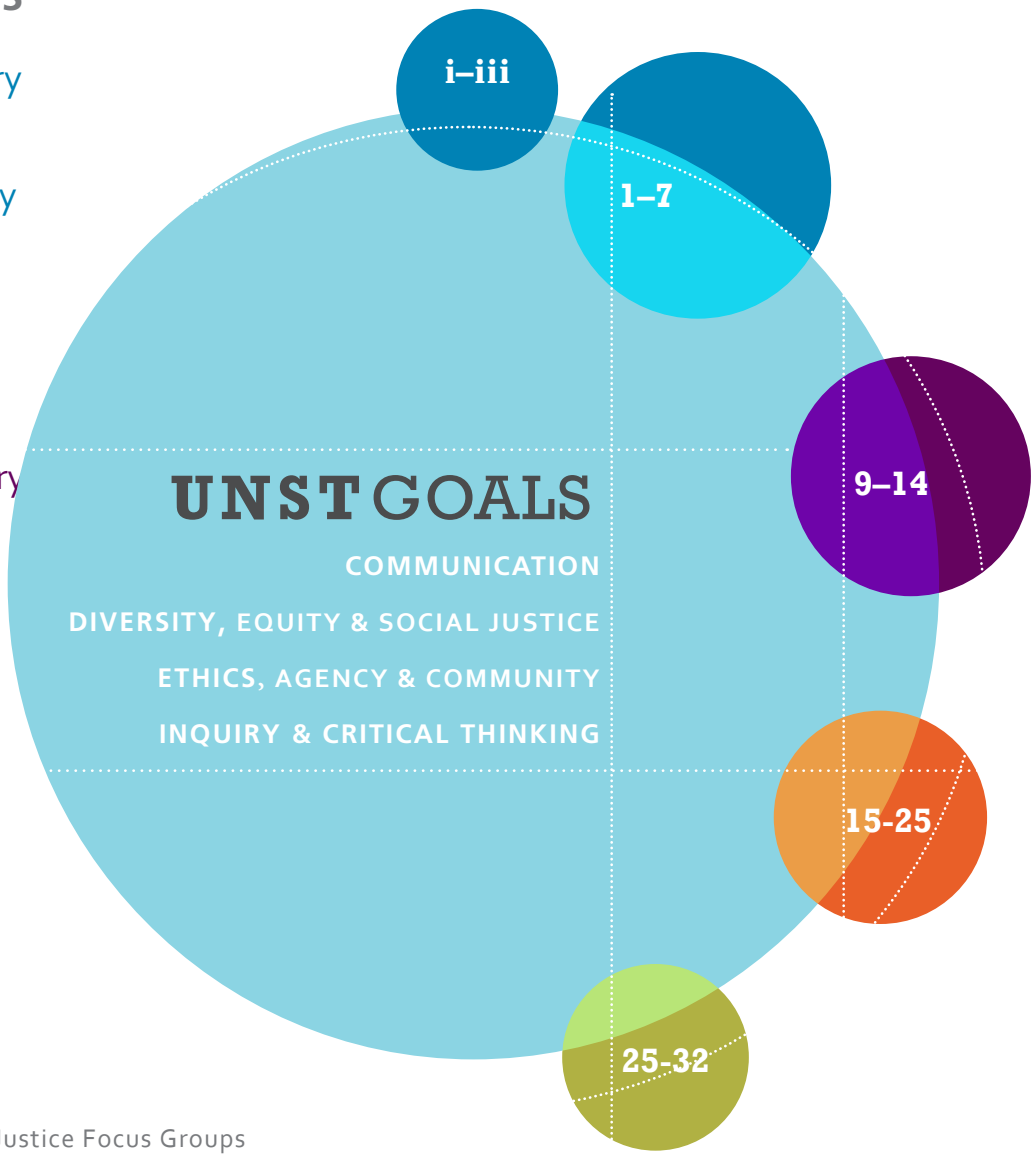

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & SOCIAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT

Over the course of the 2018-2019 academic year, University Studies' assessment efforts focused on the revised Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice learning goal. Here, you will find a brief overview and summary of our findings, which are more fully explored in the later sections of the report. Other sections of the report include information on aspects of the program outside of the Diversity, Equity and Social Justice learning goal.

## Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice Timeline

2016-2017 – UNST Council worked to revise what had been the Appreciation of Human Diversity learning goal. A subcommittee held campus discussions to get input and finalize a revision.

2017 – Faculty Senate passed the recommended revision, adopting Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice as a new learning goal.

2017-2018 – A faculty working group developed the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice rubric. UNST Faculty and the Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion provided feedback. We piloted the rubric on a sample of student work.

2018 – 2019 – Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice was a focus for assessment including course evaluations, student and course portfolios, and student focus groups.

## Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice Rubric Dimensions

The faculty working group agreed on the following as dimensions of the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice learning goal.

- Historical and Contemporary Contexts
- Concepts of Power Relations
- Multiple Perspectives
- Identity: Positionality
- Identity: Critical Reflection

## FRINQ, SINQ and Capstone students agree that their courses address issues of diversity and name many examples of their learning related to the new goal.

Course evaluations are administered at the end of each FRINQ, SINQ, and Capstone.

- We asked students whether they agree that their course addressed issues of Diversity.
- We asked open-ended questions about what activities related to the DESJ goal and what the student learned related to the DESJ goal. We analyzed a sample of comments for themes and for alignment with rubric categories.

**80%** or more of students who responded to end of term surveys **agreed that their course addressed issues of diversity**.

Comments about DESJ learning related most often to:

Historical and Contemporary Contexts

*More about the city where I live. Also about the interactions between my government (state and federal) and the people who are being affected by it the most*

Multiple Perspectives

*I learned a lot about the perspective of those who are minorities and how they feel on a day to day basis and what they think can change in order to make our community a better place.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & SOCIAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT

## **FRINQ portfolios** demonstrated the most evidence for considering **Multiple Perspectives and Historical and Contemporary Contexts.**

Over the year of a FRINQ course, students develop portfolios representing their work and reflection relating to the four University Studies goals. A sample of 167 FRINQ portfolios were scored using the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice rubric, with each portfolio being read and reviewed twice. The 4-point rubric was designed such that a 3 is a score expected of a student at the end of their sophomore year.

| | % >=1.5 (n=167) |
|---|---|
| Multiple Perspectives | 72% |
| Historical and Contemporary Contexts | 66% |
| Concepts of Power Relations | 56% |
| Identity: Critical Self Reflection | 55% |
| Identity: Positionality | 54% |

## **Capstone and SINQ course portfolios** show that the **courses address the DESJ goal** with an emphasis on **Multiple Perspectives and Historical and Contemporary Contexts**

Course portfolios, which include syllabi, assignment instructions, and examples of student work produced in the course, provide a way to view student work in the context of the whole course, and to identify examples that can be shared with the larger SINQ or Capstone communities. This process serves the dual purposes of engaging participating faculty in a summative programmatic assessment and serving as a formative faculty development experience.

| | SINQ (courses) | Capstone (courses) |
|---|---|---|
| Minimal | 0/9 | 2/13 |
| Meets Expectations | 6/9 | 4/13 |
| Meets+ (between M & E) | | 5/13 |
| Exemplary | 3/9 | 2/13 |

9 SINQ Faculty participated in the review representing 9 out of 15 SINQ themes, 20% of SINQ sections and 28% of SINQ students. 13 Capstone faculty participated, representing 20% of Capstone sections and 20% of Capstone students.

On the respective review days, 3-4 person groups of faculty were formed, with the UNST Directors or Faculty Support Specialists 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. Faculty then reviewed the portfolios of each of their group members, completing both summative and formative assessment documents. The summative review rated the course as minimally meeting the expectation, meeting the expectation, or as an exemplary model for the goal. A faculty member from another group also reviewed each portfolio. We also reviewed SINQ portfolios for alignment with the rubric criteria.

| | SINQ (courses) |
|---|---|
| Multiple Perspectives | 9/9 |
| Historical and Contemporary Contexts | 8/9 |
| Concepts of Power Relations | 5/9 |
| Identity: Critical Self Reflection | 2/9 |
| Identity: Positionality | 1/9 |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & SOCIAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT

## Student focus groups revealed the value of the DESJ goal and the importance of both faculty and peers in the learning process.

To supplement our other assessment data, we wanted to know what students thought about the value of the DESJ goal, the instructor approaches that were helpful and whether they felt their identities were being included in the course materials and activities. During winter term, a sample of students who were enrolled in FRINQ, SINQ, and Capstone courses were invited to participate in focus groups related to the DESJ goal. During spring term, a team of trained undergraduate researchers facilitated seven hour-long focus groups with 22 students.

Students made direct connections between the learning goal and their futures.

- *Any job you get or career..you're going to be working with people in business or public. Everyone's different, you have to be able to create equity.*

Faculty set ground rules, model engagement, and create space for student interaction.

- *practice nonviolent communication …. Introduced it, content on it. She required it all quarter, it was great.*
- *he would present different points of view. He showed a video too, about someone who changed their point of view through time. That was really cool.*
- *really doing things to get people to be comfortable with each other first I think is a good stepping stone towards being able to learn better because if everybody's awkward you're not going to be able to learn anything*

Students need each other to help deepen their learning.

- *The professor has just one perspective in a group and I learned more from other people in my group just because there's a bigger variety of people.*

A small minority of students saw the goal as window dressing and named instances when DESJ situations were not handled well.

- *Mental illness doesn't come up … the only time that I really feel like that came up was when classmates did a presentation on it and they did a really good job but it shouldn't have been just my classmates*
- *The professor really didn't handle it and anyway so she actively avoided it*

## Next Steps

These assessment results have been shared with University Studies faculty at pre-fall term gatherings, where there were opportunities to share ideas and to reflect on the ways in which the findings suggest areas for adjustment or improvement.

In a follow up to the fall Capstone workshop, University Studies will sponsor a workshop for faculty across all levels related to trauma informed pedagogy.

As we look forward to implementing the Ethics, Agency, and Community learning goal, we will focus on facilitating and supporting student reflection which is a critical component in both goals.

We will continue to gather course evaluation information on the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice goal so that we can monitor our progress and will evaluate student and course portfolios again in a few years to look for progress.

For more information regarding University Studies assessment, please contact Rowanna Carpenter, Director of Assessment (carpenr@pdx.edu).

# FRESHMAN INQUIRY ASSESSMENT

FRINQ

## FOCUS OF THE YEAR

Support for the implementation of the University Studies Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice goal continued to be a significant focus of the year with findings from its first assessment included below. This goal, revised by the University Studies Council, shifted from an emphasis on respect for difference to a critical examination of power and privilege.

While we worked on implementing this goal, the University Studies Council continued its work and completed the revision of the former Ethics & Social Responsibility goal. The new goal of Ethics, Agency, & Community states that "students will examine values, theories, and practices that inform their actions, and reflect on how personal choices and group decisions impact local and global communities."

Due to changes in budget priorities, it was a difficult year within University Studies for student support services with both the Graduate Student Coordinator and half-time Student Success Coordinator positions in the University Studies Student Support HUB eliminated.

With the implementation of the advising redesign in fall 2018, maintaining our partnership with the office of student orientation was essential and included developing and delivering presentations for a new orientation schedule, hosting affinity lunches for first-generation students, writing the general education material for a new online orientation platform, and participating in pre-orientation student events.

A second fully online FRINQ course was developed in the theme of Race & Social Justice to begin in fall 2019. Research into the development of an online FRINQ support lab focused on inclusion and supporting student success in the online classroom concluded that those objectives continued to be best met through the online peer mentor sections of the course.

We welcomed the third cohort of Think College Inclusion Oregon (TCIO) students into FRINQ (https://www.pdx.edu/career-and-community-studies/) and college housing became an option for these students after their first year of courses.

## 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. During spring 2018 two new open-ended questions were added that addressed the new UNST Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice learning goal.

*Method*: During the final three weeks of spring term 2019, FRINQ students completed the End-of-year Survey. This online survey was administered during mentor sessions. 825 students responded to the survey, representing a 67.4% 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. The new Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice questions were analyzed for qualitative themes that are shared with faculty and inform the activities at the fall 2019 faculty workshop.

### 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 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 2018, students were asked for permission to evaluate their portfolios as part of program assessment for University Studies. 250 student portfolios were randomly selected for review. This year, the portfolio review process focused on the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice goal, which was assessed using a 4-point rubric across five criteria, where 3 is a score expected of a student at the end of their sophomore year. 167 FRINQ portfolios were scored during the rating period. Intercoder reliability for the rubric categories is presented in the table below and illustrates that each category is above 80% agreement.

| Rubric Category | Intercoder Reliability |
|---|---|
| Historical and Contemporary Contexts | 84% |
| Concepts of Power Relations | 88% |
| Multiple Perspectives | 88% |
| Identity: Positionality | 85% |
| Identity: Critical Reflection | 82% |

## 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.** Continuing the increasing trend from the year before, more than 80% of FRINQ students agreed or strongly agreed with all items related to UNST learning goals. Student agreement levels fluctuate somewhat year to year but remain fairly and consistently high.

**Students also generally agreed with statements about their faculty members' teaching practices.** Over 90% of students agree that faculty showed a personal interest in their learning. Additionally, students were most likely to agree that faculty used a variety of methods to evaluate student progress, formed groups to facilitate learning, related course materials to real life situations, and encouraged sharing ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differed from their own (all above 85%). Students were least likely to agree that their FRINQ faculty explained how each topic fit into the course, presented course material clearly, or provided helpful feedback. Each item showed an increase since last year; 5%, 4%, and 3%, respectively, with the first two achieving their highest level in six years. The pattern of percentages for each variable continues to remain relatively consistent. Meaning the variables, such as those mentioned above, where the program scores highest remain high and those where the program scores lowest remain low. However, most significant this year, is that all categories are above 70% for the first time in six years.

### FRINQ Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice Comment Analysis

#### *What Activities in this Class Related to the New Goal?*

Students named many different activities from their FRINQ courses that supported their learning related to our new learning goal. In particular, they identified the following:

- Course readings—Many students named specific readings, and some readings were named multiple times.
- In-class discussion –revealed new perspectives, clarified readings
- Written assignments—e.g., research paper, book review, essay
- "All of them" – Some students said their entire course addressed the goal and didn't name specific activities.
- Videos/films
- Field trips/Community-based learning

Less frequently, students indicated that their guest speakers, group work, and work on their eportfolio contributed to their learning.

#### *What Did You Learn from those Activities Related to the New Goal?*

We found evidence of student learning overwhelming related to the rubric categories of context and multiple perspectives, with some reference to self-reflection.

- Context: We want students to be able to name the context (geographic, historical, cultural, etc.) that frames an issue and make connections to historical inequities or marginalized groups. Students often referenced their course theme as an effective framing device for course activities related to diversity, equity, and social justice. Among the comments that students made regarding their learning about context are the following:
  - *I learned that a lot of the problems that poc faced in the past are still here in society and probably won't go away without many impactful social movements.*
  - *This was the first class where my thinking itself was challenged. We talked about how we can't totally understand history, how we can't label history, etc. This class has been my only so far to give me such a nuanced, historic view of diversity/equity/social justice.*
  - *how power relationships are actually happening every day, and it's hard to notice sometimes.*

- Multiple Perspectives: We want students to be able to consider and "take on" other perspectives in order to understand the many way in which people experience the world. For the second year in a row, this was the most frequently articulated element of the rubric. Among the student comments regarding multiple perspectives are the following:

- *the different perspective of people in the past and how we need to learn both sides to form our own opinions*
- *I learned new perspectives from my classmates surrounding social issues and their thoughts on ethics and equality.*
- *It really helped connect/expose us to perspectives within our campus community and to identify how social justice issues are affecting those around us and what kind of change people would like to see*

- Critical Self-reflection: A part of the DESJ rubric focuses on a student's examination of their own identity, power, and privilege and the ways in which those may influence their perspectives. As with last year's analysis, fewer students reported what they learned about themselves with any depth, although occasionally students mentioned "identity" in broad terms:
  - *I learned more about what my own personal culture is, my beliefs and identity, and how I am able to make changes in the world*
  - *I learned about my impact and my place in society. It helped me become more aware of the injustices around me and how I can help.*

## FRINQ ePortfolio Review

Using the 4-point Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice rubric, a score of 3 represents program expectations for student achievement at the end of their sophomore year. **72% of FRINQ students scored a 1.5 or higher for categories related to Multiple Perspectives and 66% scored at that level for Historical and Contemporary Contexts. Just over half of FRINQ students scored at that level for the Concepts of Power, Identity: Positionality, and Identity: Critical Reflection categories.**

FRINQ student portfolios provided evidence that students were identifying inequities related to historically marginalized groups and were able to put those inequities in some context. Students were also able to identify, in a limited way, the way in which people from some different social locations might perceive or experience a situation. There was less evidence of students applying concepts of power to issues of social justice, reflecting on their own social location, or questioning their own perspectives and beliefs.

In the discussion following the scoring process, experienced reviewers reported the sense that there was less reflection in the portfolios than in previous years. Student reflections are often the place where students are reflecting on their own experiences and identities and connecting that to the work in the class. They are the place we would expect to find evidence of their understanding of social location and the questioning of their own beliefs, some of the lower rated categories on the rubric.

## FRINQ ePortfolio Process

This year was the first year we used the new Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice rubric and it was the first year that we used an analytic rubric as the primary tool for assessing FRINQ portfolios. Analytic rubrics require reviewers to give a single portfolio a score for each of the five rubric categories. We did not know how long such a rubric would take to calibrate, nor did we know exactly how long it would take to review each portfolio. We discovered that the calibration process took longer than in previous years and we began reviewing portfolios later in the day. However, reviewers spent an average of 13 minutes per review, only slightly longer than in previous years.

When asked about the process of assigning 5 scores to each portfolio rather than one as was the previous practice, reviewers reported appreciating that they could differentiate across the categories and assign a high score where one was warranted and a low score in another area, rather than having to average across criteria to assign a single score.

Overall, the process of working with the new rubric was successful. If we are able to move through calibration more efficiently, we will be able to review more portfolios.

# FRESHMAN INQUIRY ASSESSMENT

FRINQ

## 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

◆ = highest percent

| | | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | **18-19** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 797 | 809 | 862 | 776 | 872 | **825** |
| Apply course material to **improve critical thinking**. | | ◆ 87.9 | 84.2 | 85.6 | 82.2 | 82.9 | **86.8** |
| Acquire skills in **working with others** as a member of a team. | | 84.0 | 82.7 | 82.9 | 83.8 | 82.8 | ◆ **86.6** |
| **Explore issues of diversity** such as race; class; gender; sexual orientation; ethnicity. | | 84.9 | 82.1 | 85.1 | 86.2 | 84.5 | ◆ **87.7** |
| Develop my **speaking skills**. | | 74.2 | 73.7 | 75.3 | 72.0 | 74.4 | ◆ **79.3** |
| Develop skills in **expressing myself in writing**. | | 83.7 | 80.5 | 82.0 | 79.5 | 82.2 | ◆ **87.5** |
| Learn how to **find and use resources** for answering or solving problems. | | 79.4 | 75.1 | 79.1 | 74.0 | 79.5 | ◆ **81.4** |
| Learn how to **analyze and critically evaluate** ideas, arguments and multiple points of view. | | ◆ 87.3 | 84.7 | 83.2 | 80.7 | 83.3 | **86.9** |
| Explore **ethical issues**. | | 86.8 | 85.1 | 85.6 | 85.7 | 87.2 | ◆ **88.5** |

# FRESHMAN INQUIRY ASSESSMENT

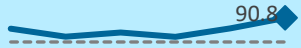
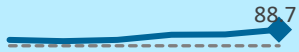
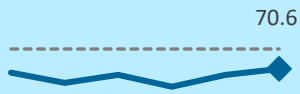
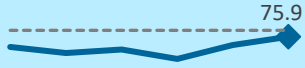
FRINQ

## The Freshman Inquiry Faculty

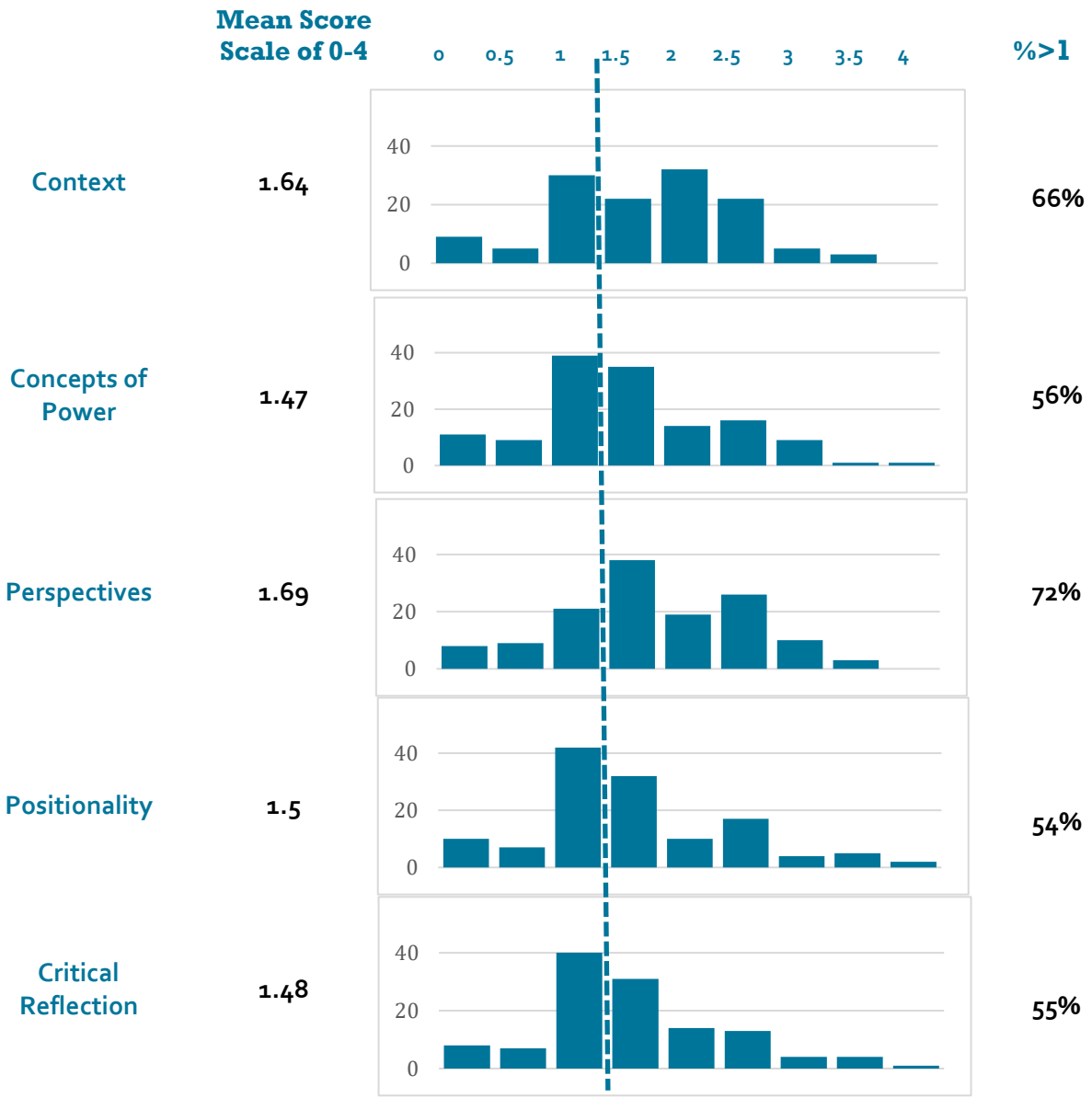
Ratings made on a scale of 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

**Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed**

◆ = highest percent

| | | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 797 | 809 | 862 | 776 | 872 | 825 |
| Displayed a **personal interest in students** and their learning. |   | 85.9 | 82.4 | 84.3 | 82.3 | 86.1 | ◆ **90.8** |
| Scheduled course work (class activities; tests; projects) in ways that **encouraged students to stay up to date** in their work. | | 74.6 | 73.0 | 75.7 | 66.7 | 76.5 | ◆ **80.6** |
| **Formed teams or discussion groups** to facilitate learning. |   | 83.2 | 82.5 | 83.2 | 86.0 | 86.2 | ◆ **88.7** |
| Made it **clear how each topic fit** into the course. | | 72.3 | 67.6 | 70.2 | 66.3 | 71.5 | ◆ **74.8** |
| **Presents course material** in a way that is **clear and understandable.** |   | 68.8 | 64.0 | 67.8 | 62.2 | 67.8 | ◆ **70.6** |
| Related course material to **real life situations**. | | 82.7 | 79.8 | 78.1 | 78.4 | 79.2 | ◆ **86.1** |
| **Inspired students to set and achieve goals** which really challenged them**.** |   | 69.5 | 65.5 | 67.8 | 61.8 | 70.7 | ◆ **75.9** |
| Asked students to **share ideas and experiences with others** whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own. | | 82.2 | 80.3 | 82.6 | 79.6 | 83.1 | ◆ **87.8** |
| **Provided helpful feedback** on tests; reports; projects; etc. to help students improve. | | ◆ 73.4 | 70.0 | 69.5 | 65.0 | 71.1 | **73.1** |
| Encouraged **student-faculty interaction outside of class**. | | 70.4 | 71.9 | 73.2 | 74.4 | 77.3 | ◆ **82.2** |
| **Used variety of methods**: presentations, class projects, exams, participation, papers, essays **to evaluate student progress**. | | 83.0 | 81.0 | 83.3 | 84.0 | 84.9 | ◆ **89.4** |

## FRINQ ePortfolio Score Distribution



## REFLECTION & ACTION STEPS

### Program Focus

Winter term of the 2019-20 academic year marks the sixth year since the creation of a Director of the Freshman Year Experience in University Studies. A next step in the program's development will be for faculty teaching in FRINQ to have a more coordinated role in the program through the creation of a FRINQ Curriculum Committee. We will also be exploring research partnerships with other first-time, first-year programs and increase our contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

In 2018-19, we gathered data to begin a program review of the First-Year Experience in Residential Life (FYE) and will continue that work in 2019-20 with the objective of improving both the educational outcomes for students and the faculty experience.

As part of a five-year grant, in addition to welcoming and supporting the fourth cohort of Think College Inclusion students, we will support efforts to renew the grant through the U.S. Department of Education as well as build on our progress working with campus housing to create access to the Residential First-Year Experience sections of FRINQ.

Per the 2018-19 ePortfolio assessment findings, the University Studies Council will revisit the role of quantitative literacy in the Communication goal. With the adoption of the Ethics, Agency, & Community learning goal in the spring of 2019, we will work with faculty and the Director of Research & Assessment to create a rubric for the new learning goal and support faculty efforts to integrate it into their curriculum.

Although University Studies efforts to provide student success support outside of the FRINQ classroom stalled, there is renewed interest campus wide in promoting student success that we will contribute to. The restructuring of campus advising led to the loss of a partner in the HUB, we will begin the 2019 academic year exploring a partnership with the campus Tutoring & Learning Center to create co-curricular support for students and faculty.

### FRINQ End-of-Year Survey

The six-year high in 16 out of 19 categories with all 19 over 70% is a significant accomplishment and result from programmatic investments in the expansion of support for faculty development and faculty stability making 2018-19 the first year in six without new faculty.

However, with recent revisions of all four University Studies goals, it is time to revisit our survey instruments to determine if they are up to date in meeting the needs of faculty and the program. This coincides with our participation in a campus-wide project to migrate all departmental end-of-term evaluations to a shared platform.

Similarly, in the last few years we have piloted two significant structural changes to curriculum delivery with the addition of two "on-grid" sections of FRINQ and two online FRINQs and developing the best assessment tool for each will be a focus of 2019-20.

### FRINQ ePortfolio Review

Utilizing the findings from the first assessment of the Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice goal, we will focus our efforts to support faculty in developing curriculum that more clearly addresses the three lowest scoring rubric categories: concepts of power, positionality, and critical reflection. Because critical reflection is essential to metacognition and thereby the FRINQ curriculum, the low score for critical reflection is most surprising and points to a need for further investigation.

Although calibration of an analytic rubric takes more time, it did not significantly lengthen the time needed to review each ePortfolio. Yet, without the detail provided by the analytic rubric we would not know where to focus our support efforts. This is a significant efficiency that warrants the programmatic investment.

After having successfully expanded the number of FRINQ sections using PebblePad as the ePortfolio platform, we will update our templates and work to improve the continuity of how students, peer mentors, and faculty utilize the platform. We will also work with the Director of Research & Assessment to assess the new Ethics, Agency, & Community goal utilizing the rubric developed by a faculty working group.

## FOCUS OF THE YEAR

With the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice goal fully implemented and a rubric developed, we now turn our attention to implementation of the second goal to be revised, Ethics, Agency, and Community. An assessment rubric will be developed for this new goal this year and we hope that implementation will be smoother now that the novelty of adopting a revised goal has passed. I look forward to seeing how faculty build curricula to respond to the opportunities presented by the thoughtfulness put in to anticipating how these goals might work together when put in students' hands. Preliminary results of the pilot of a SINQ Portfolio review, modeled after Capstone Portfolio review are positive and I will be interested to see the development of longitudinal data on the use of the two revised goals.

We will also need to keep a close watch on the impacts of reduced Graduate Mentor capacity on student success in SINQ courses. AY 18-19 was the first year in which all SINQ mentors were on .49 contracts and being assigned to two sections of Sophomore Inquiry. The resourcefulness and resilience of the mentor community has kept their work moving forward, but many of them are struggling to balance their increased workload and faculty are finding it increasingly difficult to find time with mentors to coordinate main and mentor session activities and to triage emergent student concerns and challenges to their success. Several measures of student success most closely attached to graduate mentors (sense of community, satisfied with class experience, etc.) are at five year lows. This data cannot be completely correlated with double mentor assignments, but we will need to closely track and positively respond to any further deterioration in these measures.

## TOOLS AND METHODS

### SINQ End-of-Term Survey

Purpose: The SINQ End-of-Term Survey asked students to rate their experiences in their SINQ courses related to 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. During 2017-2018, two open-ended questions were added that addressed the new UNST Diversity, Equity, Social Justice learning goal. Those questions were also included on course evaluations this year.

Method: During the final three weeks of each term during the 2018-2019 academic year, SINQ students completed the End-of-Term Survey. This online survey was administered during mentor sessions. Over three terms in the academic year, 3184 student responses were collected and analyzed. Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice questions were analyzed for qualitative themes which will be reported back to faculty at the beginning-of-year gathering. A set of 200 comments were randomly selected for analysis. The Director of Assessment and the Faculty Support Coordinator each reviewed the comments separately and then met to discuss their findings and agree on emergent themes. As a point of reference, we used the elements of the Diversity, Equity, Social Justice rubric (context, concepts, multiple perspectives, social location, and critical reflection.

### SINQ Course Portfolio – Diversity, Equity, Social Justice

Purpose: SINQ course portfolios were modeled after an assessment process that has been in operation at the Capstone level for several years. Course portfolios, which include syllabi, assignment instructions, and examples of student work produced in the course, provide a way to view student work in the context of the whole course, and to identify examples that can be shared with the larger SINQ community. Our process serves the dual purposes of engaging participating faculty in a summative programmatic assessment and serving as a formative faculty development experience.

Method: SINQ instructors were invited to create course portfolios during the 2018-2019 academic year. Nine course portfolios were constructed for assessment, representing nine of our fifteen SINQ themes. We held initial meetings where faculty shared with each other the ways in which they incorporate a focus on Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice in their courses. 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 DESJ goal, and student work samples responding to that assignment.

To assess the course portfolios a group consisting of the SINQ/Cluster Director, the Director of Assessment and a Capstone faculty member constructed a framework for evaluating the goal in these course portfolios. This framework included a list of the types of learning related to diversity that are expected in SINQ and a scoring guide that included information on scoring portfolios as needs development, meeting

expectations, or exemplary. On the portfolio review day, six SINQ faculty members, the Faculty Support Coordinator, the SINQ/Cluster Director 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 DESJ goal, data which are reviewed only by the Director of Assessment (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, equity, and social justice'?" 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, equity, and social justice" goal in future offerings of this course?"

Following an explanation of the process, faculty performed a calibration on a sample portfolio, 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.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### SINQ End-of-Term Survey Quantitative Ratings

**In general, most students agreed that they had the opportunities to address all four of the University Studies goals in their SINQ courses.** Students indicated the strongest level of agreement with regard to the UNST learning goals of Critical evaluation of ideas from multiple points of view, Opportunities to explore ethical issues and dilemmas, and improving Written Communication (86.3%, 84.2%, and 82.8%, respectively). When looking at other aspects of SINQ courses, students indicated least agreement with developing speaking skills (74.5%), and when expressing overall satisfaction with class experience (74.1%). Additionally, there is a continuing declining student agreement trend with regard to feeling a sense of community with their classmates (dropped another 2.1% to 62.2%, which is the lowest value seen in 7 years). See pages 12 and 13 for a full table of results.

**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 scheduled coursework in ways that encouraged students to stay up-to-date on their work (80.4%), clearly stated the learning objectives for the course (80.3%), and created an atmosphere that encouraged active participation (80.2%),

### End-of-Term Survey Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice student comments

*What Activities in this Class Related to the New Goal?*
Students named many different activities from their SINQ courses that supported their learning related to our new learning goal. In particular, they identified the following:

- Course readings – Many students named specific readings.
- In-class discussion or activities
- Written assignments (e.g., research paper, book review, blog post, reflection)
- "All of them" – Some students said their entire course addressed the goal and didn't name specific activities.
- Videos/films
- Mentor session –Students specifically mentioned that their mentor session supported their learning.

*What Did You Learn from those Activities Related to the New Goal?* As with our analysis of the FRINQ comments, we found evidence of student learning overwhelming related to the rubric categories of context and multiple perspectives

- Context: We want students to be able to name the context (geographic, historical, cultural, etc.) that frames an issue and make connections to historical inequities or marginalized groups. Many students named a context as part of their report of their learning

(e.g., popular culture, history, Portland, America, political systems, technology, etc.). Among the comments made by students are the following:

- *I learned about how past relationships and identities affect present day culture/identification. I also learned how the different aspects play a role in the global arena.*
- *I learned about new theories relating to family dynamics and the differences between families from different cultures and economic statuses.*
- *More about the city where I live, and about the different kinds of people who live around me. Also about the interactions between my government(state and federal) and the people who are being affected by it the most*

- Multiple Perspectives: We want students to be able to consider and "take on" other perspectives in order to understand the many way in which people experience the world. For the second year, and as with the FRINQ comments, this was the most frequently articulated element of the rubric. Students named their peers in class discussion as well as readings and videos as critical to their understanding of new perspectives:

  - *Gained an understanding of how people's perspectives on history have changed over time and in response to various historical events.*
  - *I learned about other people's perspectives on being a minority in Europe.*
  - *Perception is very different due to time period, location, and experience.*
  - *I learned a lot about the perspective of those who are minorities and how they feel on a day to day basis and what they think can change in order to make our community a better place.*

- Concepts of Power Relations: We are interested in helping our students learn to use concepts, theories, or frameworks to examine power relationships with applications to social justice. Fewer of our students named learning that fell into this category, but students did name concepts or frameworks such as gentrification, health disparities, oppression, and intersectionality in talking about their learning.

  - *I learned A LOT. Learned about hegemony, subjectivity, diversity of the human experience from the perspectives of gender, race, and class, I learned how to spot these concepts in action in popular culture, these are just some examples. We covered a lot in this class.*
  - *I think the biggest thing I learned from the class was seeing the presences of a hierarchical power structure set up everywhere, including the classroom and how much it has affected my learning personally.*
  - *Everything. From intersectionality and how the term was coined to begin with to systemic oppression of both people with uteruses and POC. And obviously the LGBTQ+ community.*

- Critical Self-reflection: A part of the DESJ rubric focuses on a student's examination of their own identity, power, and privilege and the ways in which those may influence their perspectives. As with last year's analysis and with the comments of FRINQ students, fewer students reported what they learned about themselves with any depth, although occasionally students mentioned "identity" in broad terms:

  - *I was able to freely speak about my religion with the support of my professor, mentor, and peers. Also, they engaged with my work which is great! I was able to learn about my peers' story and how they related to mine.*
  - *I think the most important thing to take away from these kinds of activities is that you need to be open to understanding different perspectives. It can be easy to get stuck in your own beliefs but when you stop and listen to what other people have to sayabout something it can be very eye opening.*
  - *I learned a lot about how I interact with my own identity, power relationships and social justice. I was taught actual helpful things that I will use in the future based on this.*

## SINQ Course Portfolio Ratings – Diversity, Equity, Social Justice

This was a pilot of the course portfolio process for SINQ courses. We only have a small sample of SINQ courses and faculty represented, but we did have representation from 2/3 of SINQ themes.

Course portfolios demonstrated that students are given the opportunity to engage in and demonstrate learning related to

diversity, equity, and social justice. Six courses were rated as meeting our expectations and three were rated as exemplary.

| Portfolio Rating | Number of Portfolio |
|---|---|
| **Minimal** (the portfolio indicates the expectation for learning was met minimally, if at all) | 0 |
| **Meet Expectations** (the portfolio showed that the course provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning related to diversity, equity and social justice) | 6 |
| **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) | 3 |

Reviewers rated syllabi as exemplary more often (5 courses) than they rated assignments (1) or student work samples (3) as exemplary. Courses that were rated exemplary made it clear through the syllabus how the DESJ goal fit into the course and then wove elements of the goal throughout the course. One reviewer commented, it didn't seem "tacked on." These courses showed a wide variety of engagement with many aspects of the goal. Student work samples showed deep and nuanced reflections which represented a variety of perspectives.
One theme that emerged across three courses was that the student work showed more engagement with the goal than the reviewer expected given the assignment instructions. This seems to suggest that students have opportunities elsewhere in the course which prepare them to exhibit their learning related to DESJ even when not explicitly prompted to do so.

| **Portfolio element** | **Number exemplary** |
|---|---|
| Syllabus | 5 |
| Assignment instructions | 1 |
| Student work samples | 3 |

Of the five rubric criteria, all of the participating SINQ courses offered opportunities for students to explore multiple perspectives and all but one provided opportunities for students examine historical and contemporary contexts related to the course topics. Five courses encouraged students to apply concepts of power to issues of social justice. SINQ course portfolios provided much less evidence that students were asked to examine their own positionality (1 course) or to engage in critical self reflection (2 courses).

| Rubric Criteria | |
|---|---|
| Historical and Contemporary Contexts | 8 |
| Concepts of Power Relations | 5 |
| Multiple Perspectives | 9 |
| Identity: Positionality | 1 |
| Identity: Critical Reflection | 2 |

It should be noted that SINQ courses may in fact provide opportunities for the kinds of reflection that the rubric calls for. When asked to provide one assignment, SINQ instructors may not have chosen that particular piece to present.

# SOPHOMORE INQUIRY ASSESSMENT

QNIS

## 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**

♦ = highest percent

| | | 13-14 2794 | 14-15 2650 | 15-16 2905 | 16-17 2868 | 17-18 2812 | **18-19** 3184 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The course provided opportunities to learn to **analyze and critically evaluate** ideas, arguments and multiple points of view. | 86.3 | ♦ 87.70 | 85.8 | 85.8 | 86.0 | 86.3 | **86.3** |
| The course provided opportunities to develop skills in **working with others as a member of a team**. | 76.8 | 77.6 | 74.9 | ♦ 78.2 | 76.2 | 73.7 | **76.8** |
| The course provided opportunities to **explore issues of diversity** such as race; class; gender; sexual orientation; ethnicity. | 79.7 | 77.5 | 80.6 | 80.3 | 78.9 | ♦ 81.5 | **79.7** |
| The course provided opportunities to develop skills in **expressing myself orally**. | 74.5 | 73.0 | 68.5 | 53.0 | 51.4 | ♦ 74.7 | **74.5** |
| The course provided opportunities to develop skills in **expressing myself in writing**. | 82.8 | 83.1 | 81.3 | 80.8 | 79.9 | ♦ 84.6 | **82.8** |
| The course provided opportunities to **explore ethical issues and dilemmas**. | 84.2 | 83.4 | 82.4 | 83.3 | 83.7 | ♦ 84.8 | **84.2** |
| I **understand** how this course fits into my **PSU general education** requirements. | 75.2 | 75.1 | 74.3 | ♦ 75.5 | 75.0 | 74.3 | **75.2** |
| It was clear how the work from the **mentor session connected to the overall course**. | 75.3 | ♦ 81.5 | 78.7 | 79.1 | 79.6 | 77.5 | **75.3** |
| I felt a **sense of community** with my classmates in this course. | 62.2 | ♦ 66.8 | 65.9 | 65.8 | 65.1 | 64.1 | **62.2** |
| Overall, I was **satisfied with my experience** in this class. | 74.1 | 75.6 | 76.1 | 75.3 | ♦ 76.3 | 74.2 | **74.1** |

# SOPHOMORE INQUIRY ASSESSMENT

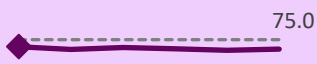
QNIS

## The Sophomore Inquiry Faculty

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

**Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed**

◆ = highest percent

| | | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | **18-19** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2794 | 2650 | 2905 | 2868 | 2812 | **3184** |
| Displayed a **personal interest in students** and their learning. | | 80.0 | 78.9 | 79.9 | ◆ 81.0 | 80.4 | **77.7** |
| Scheduled course work (class activities; tests; projects) in ways which **encouraged students to stay up to date** in their work. | | 80.4 | 79.6 | ◆ 82.1 | 80.5 | 80.3 | **80.4** |
| Provided **timely and frequent feedback** on test; reports; projects; etc. to help students improve. |   | ◆ 76.2 | 74.8 | 75.9 | 75.1 | 74.3 | **75.0** |
| **Used a variety of methods**: papers; presentations; class projects; exams; etc. **to evaluate student progress**. | | ◆ 77.5 | 75.0 | 77.4 | 76.6 | 76.3 | **76.2** |
| **Clearly stated the learning objectives** for the overall course. | | 80.4 | 78.4 | 81.6 | 78.5 | ◆ 82.1 | **80.3** |
| Clearly stated the **criteria for grading.** | | ◆ 78.6 | 75.4 | 78.0 | 75.0 | 78.2 | **77.0** |
| Created an atmosphere that encouraged **active student participation**. | | 81.1 | 80.1 | 82.2 | 81.1 | ◆ 82.8 | **80.2** |
| Used activities and assignments that allowed me to feel **personally engaged in my learning**. | | 77.6 | 76.5 | 77.9 | ◆ 78. 7 | 76.8 | **77.6** |

## REFLECTION

The rubric devised for the revised Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice goal was implemented in AY 18-19. Courses that were evaluated in the pilot SINQ portfolio assessment process were developed between implementation of the revised goal and construction of the attendant rubric. Results were positive on the categories of Historical/Contemporary Contexts, Models/Frameworks, and Multiple Perspectives but quite weak on the two categories of Critical Self Reflection on Identity and Positionality. Thus, in our near future work with SINQ faculty and mentors, we will need to place some emphasis on how to engage students on these two critical elements of the revised goal.

As mentioned earlier, students' assessment of mentor-related measures is dropping, coincident with the doubling of mentor assignments. Particularly concerning is the 5 year low on sense of community and satisfaction with class experience. Equally concerning, but not as clearly tied to mentor assignments, are the 5 year lows on faculty taking a personal interest in students and encouraging active student participation. Even in the context of the struggles associated with stretched mentors and a continued over-reliance on contingent faculty, there are a number of measures on which we are seeing recent improvement or at least holding steady, most notably in oral expression.

# SENIOR CAPSTONE ASSESSMENT

## FOCUS OF THE YEAR

Our primary goal for 2018-19 was to deepen our practices to address the University Studies goal of Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice. We did this by bringing in Oregon Humanities facilitators to deepen our historical understanding of race in Oregon and to provide multiple modalities for faculty to address Diversity, Equity and Social Justice in Capstone courses. We continued to ask two qualitative questions in our end of term evaluation about how Capstones were addressing this new goal. Furthermore, we specifically asked students in the qualitative mid-quarter feedback sessions how they addressed this goal in Capstones. In addition the Capstone Review Committee engaged in a rigorous process to modify our Capstone proposal review to adopt a critical community-based learning perspective. Now faculty are asked to consider the core tenants of *critical* community engagement to ensure that we are advocating for a social change orientation in Capstones so that we don't perpetuate racial inequity through our community-based courses.

## 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. During 2017-2018, two new open-ended questions were added that addressed the new UNST Diversity, Equity, Social Justice learning goal. We continued to ask those questions in 2018-2019.

Method: Students enrolled in Capstone courses complete paper-based course evaluations in class at the end of their course. During the 2018 -2019 academic year, 2137 student surveys were completed and analyzed.

### 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 on-line teaching experience poses the same SGID questions in a digital format and receives written feedback from our on-line students. The SGID assessment process typically seeks student input on the students' perception of the course, community work, suggestions for improvement and the UNST learning goals. This year the SGID assessment process and especially the analysis focused on students' learning regarding the new Diversity, Equity and Social Justice goal. Data were analyzed by an experienced faculty development coordinator with significant professional expertise in diversity and equity issues.

### Capstone Course Portfolio Review

#### Capstone Course Portfolio Assessment: Diversity, Equity, Social Justice

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 reflects our dual purposes of engaging 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 2018-2019 academic year. Thirteen course portfolios were constructed for assessment. We held initial meetings where faculty shared with each other the ways in which they incorporate a focus on Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice 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 DESJ goal, and student work samples responding to that assignment.

To assess the course portfolios a group consisting of the Capstone Director, the Director of Assessment and a Capstone faculty member constructed a framework for evaluating the goal in these course portfolios. This framework included a list of the types of learning related to diversity that occur in Capstone courses and a scoring guide that included information on scoring

portfolios as needs development, meeting expectations, or exemplary. On the portfolio review day, eight Capstone faculty members, the Faculty Support Coordinator 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 DESJ goal, data which are reviewed only by the Director of Assessment (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, equity, and social justice'?" 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, equity, and social justice" 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 Capstones 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

Historically, Capstone courses have received high scores on course evaluations –especially on items related to the University Studies goals and the quality of faculty instruction. For the 2018-2019 academic year, aggregate scores indicate further improvement across all areas, while nine items reached peak rates of agreement including the question related to diversity (our focus for this year) where students reported that the Capstone helped them understand people different from themselves. Furthermore, the data showed that the improvement was statistically significant in seven areas including students gaining a better understanding of how to make a difference in their communities. Improvement was also apparent in Capstone faculty rating scores where every area had increased scores, 3 of 10 areas had over 90% agreement and only 2 areas were below 85% agreement.

Capstone students were most likely to agree or strongly agree that they had the opportunity to engage with students from different fields of specialization (92.9%), that they felt a personal responsibility to meet the needs of the community partner (90.5%), and they were able to connect course content to real life situations (89.2%). They were less likely to agree that they were already volunteering in the community before taking the course (42.6%) which was the only question on the survey where the Capstone could have no impact since it refers to the period of time before taking the Capstone. Oddly, this year's Capstone students indicated a historically low agreement with regard to continuing volunteer community participation after the course (69.3%), which is puzzling given the fact that they reported a historical peak agreement that they improved their learning regarding how to make a difference in their community.

Capstone students were most likely to agree that faculty related course material to real-life situations (92.5%), created an atmosphere that encouraged active participation (91.9%), and showed a personal interest in the students' learning (91%). While student agreement for all faculty areas was over 80% and also showed improvement over last year, students were least likely to agree that faculty provided clear instructions for assignments (up 2.2% to 82.4%), provided clear grading criteria (up 2.8% to 83.6%), and provided helpful feedback (up 3.3% to 85.4%).

### Capstone Student Experience Questionnaire: Qualitative

#### Overall Student Learning and Suggestions

Four primary questions were presented to students in the Capstone final course evaluation: (1) "What stands out as most important to your learning in this Capstone experience?" (2) "Are there elements of this course design you would change, and why?" (3) "What were your most significant learnings in this Capstone related to the UNST Diversity, Equity and Social Justice Learning Goal?" and (4) "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?"

For this qualitative analysis, 200 comments were randomly selected from Summer 2018, Fall 2018, and Winter 2019 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.

From the random sample of 200 responses to the question **"What stands out as most important to your learning in this Capstone experience?"** several themes emerged:

- **Importance of applying knowledge to community situations** (including social responsibility to do so) (44)

  **Example:** Becoming a better individual by practicing and engaging in the material by volunteering. It's like having a lab which helps put things into perspective.

- **New and deepened awareness of social issues and issues relevant to specific populations** (42)

  **Example:** "I gained a deeper appreciation for and understanding of the issues surrounding and ways of speaking and interacting with the trans and non-binary community. The course also deepened my understanding of the need for community-based decision making and giving voice through empowering individuals, rather than researching or 'helping' those who are disenfranchised".

- **Working with peers and in groups** (27)

  **Example:** "I learned to work productively in a group".

- **Gaining topic knowledge and skills (sometimes outside of one's discipline)** (25)

  **Example:** "The research that we did behind our equity toolkit and taking these new skills into the real world has deepened my learning experience".

- **Empathy and deeper understanding of others and self** (25)

  This Capstone REALLY opened my eyes to populations different from the ones I usually interact with.

- **Instructor/facilitation including creating safe spaces for complex dialogues** (11)

  **Example:** There was a freedom in this class. Freedom to ask difficult questions that have no right answer, and to not shy away from them because of that. Freedom to be our true selves and respect the true selves of others. Freedom to be wrong and make mistakes and not be put to shame. Freedom to explore deep realities, freedom to feel real connections and emotions, and freedom to be creative. I loved the freedom in the learning environment of this capstone.

In response to the question **"Are there elements of this course design you would change, and why?,"** by far the greatest number of respondents, again, indicated that the course needed no improvement. Additional noteworthy themes that emerged from the responses to this question included:

- **None** (39)
  The most frequent response to suggestions was no or none showing that many students were very satisfied with their Capstone course and did not have suggestions for improvement.

- **Increased course organization & clarity of expectations** (30)

  **Example:** "It would be helpful for those of us taking on-line or distance learning classes to be given a copy of class expectations well in advance. The reason I mention this is because there was a lot of required Video class time and group meet ups that are difficult to adhere to when you are working full-time and have other commitments.

- **Using better modes of communication** (like D2L or Google tools rather than outside technology) (8)

  **Example:** "I would appreciate the on-line portion be more streamlined. Using Blackboard, D2L, and e-mails...caused some confusion"

- **Improvements regarding feedback from instructors** (6)

- **Example:** "I think it would be helpful if instructor feedback could be given directly on our Word documents. It would make it easier to understand where the rewrites need to happen".

## Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice Activities and Learning

The reconceptualized UNST Diversity, Equity and Social Justice Learning Goal is at the heart of our efforts around equity and inclusion in teaching and learning. Learning framed as addressing diversity, equity, and social justice helped students to understand course themes in deep ways. This deeper learning and understanding of social and environmental justice also led students to understand their positionality and to activate themselves around these issues. Other outcomes of learning related to this goal includes increased learning around structural oppression and racism and inequity in our history.

This year's evaluation form included two questions exploring the impact of the new Diversity, Equity and Social Justice Learning Goal on students' learning experience. The first question related to this goal was: "**What were your most significant learnings in this Capstone related to the UNST Diversity, Equity and Social Justice Learning Goal?"** There was a wide range of responses reflecting the array of ways instructors and students addressed this goal within their courses. Some of the most prominent themes of the learning under this goal area are summarized as follows:

- **Understanding positionality, prejudice, power and privilege**

*We talked a lot about racial prejudice, stereotypes, and immigrant misconceptions. I've now learned about wealth, gender, and racial inequality in relation to environmental justice.*

- **Understanding of intersectionality**

*We learned a lot about intersectionality and how weight and other issues go hand in hand.*

- **Understanding multiple perspectives**

*I learned a lot about others' personal experiences and about the history of our country. I also learned about others' beliefs on issues like gun control.*

- **Understanding issues from a social justice perspective (immigration, water scarcity, education, language preservation)**

*I found that language revitalization is the most prominent aspect of the course. This allowed me to critically think of how western cultures dominate others. It also made me realize the need to revitalize native languages, for the sake of an individual and their community as well.*

The final question on the course evaluation form also related to the new Diversity, Equity and Social Justice Learning goal was: "**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?"** For the most part, student responses to this question focused on broader themes or teaching and learning approaches rather than specific readings or resources. These included:

- **Readings, Videos, Podcasts (52)**

*The reading and viewing choices were timely and relevant and addressed social issues and their root causes. I loved the Flipgrid aspect of the course because it not only created a more community atmosphere, but importantly, allowed us all to be introduced to different thoughts, analyses, and criticisms of the same material; diverse voices and beliefs are important in understanding the complexity of social issues as well as the potential actions to address them.*

- **Hands-on learning in community (22)**

*Learning about Portland's local education issues was impactful. Knowing the situation right here in my city is important to be able to make change.*

- **Discussion (19)**

*I felt that all of the discussions were the most impactful to my learning in this course. Co-facilitating my own discussion also deepened my learning and made me feel more connected to my classmates. Learning about Portland's local education issues was impactful. Knowing the situation right here in my city is important to be able to make change.*

- **Reflective writing (18)**

*The other students had so many different perspectives from me, this surprised me in our reflective response writing. It gave me appreciation for all the different views people have. Honestly my reflections were the best thing. I could speak my mind freely and at the same time, learn something about myself I hadn't known before.*

- **Group work (16)**

*The group work as an activity was the most impactful because it exposed me to different ideas, values, and methods.*

## Small Group Instructional Diagnostic (SGID)

During 2018-19, formative mid-term assessment processes ("small-group instructional diagnostics," or SGIDs) were again conducted by seasoned Capstone-related faculty in approximately 20% of Capstone courses. In the SGID process, students offer anonymous feedback generated through small group discussion to their faculty member about what's working to support their learning in their course, what could change to improve their learning opportunities, and how the course addresses the UNST learning goals. Results for each question asked are listed below.

**Question 1:**
**What aspects of this course are helping you to better understand the course content & prepare you for your community work?** Four main themes emerged in response to this question:

- Importance of community-based learning activities and exposure to community partners (32)
- The strength of the instructor in terms of their content expertise, approachability, and willingness to provide guidance and feedback (18)
- Opportunities to learn side-by-side with peers in the capstone (16)
- Clarity of the syllabus (13)

**Question 2:**
**What could be changed to improve this course and what specific suggestions do you have to bring about these changes?** Four main themes emerged in response to this question:

- Clarity of the syllabus and assignments (25)
- Strengthening of the group work process (13)
- Overall pacing of the course (10)
- Improved community partnerships (9)

**Question 3:**
**In what ways does this course enhance your understanding of the University Studies goal areas (Communication, Ethics & Social Responsibility, Critical Thinking, and Diversity, Equity & Social Justice)?** Specific themes arose in relation to each of the goals. They are described below.

**Communication**

- Communication in teams and with peers in the classroom (22)
- Communication with community partners (16)

*"Not only are we required to engage with our classmates and respond to their work/thoughts/ideas, we are also required (and encouraged) to make connections between our own personal experiences and to the experiences we read within the material provided."*

**Diversity, Equity and Social Justice:**

- Developing an understanding of and empathy for a variety of marginalized communities including: indigenous communities, elders, LGBTQ individuals, second language learners, and individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities, among others (15)
- Diversity in the classroom and across majors (9)
- Learning about equity and inclusion (5)

*"We took some time lean about a population that experiences the world very differently than probably most of us. That, alone, has opened my eyes."*

**Social and Ethical Responsibility:**

- A deepened understanding of business ethics (8)
- Enhanced awareness of civic engagement and personal responsibility (8)

*"UNST goals are salient in my mind as I consider how my assumptions influence my behavior and my approach in communicating with others."*

**Critical Thinking:**

- Examining the perspectives of others and self (14)
- Solving problems and addressing challenges related to the final product (7)

*"This course pushes me to take new approaches and examine new perspectives about key issues. Most important, it's teaching me to analyze the general public's relationship to these issues and to discover how layered and complex they can be."*

## Capstone Course Portfolio Ratings
### Diversity, Equity, Social Justice

- The course portfolios demonstrated that by and large students are given opportunities to engage in and demonstrate learning related to diversity, equity, and social justice. All but two courses were were rated as meeting our expectations and two out of the sixteen were rated exemplary. Two course portfolios did not provide evidence that our goals related to diversity were being met.

- Courses that were rated exemplary provided students with experiences that deepened their engagement with and understanding of diversity, equity, and social justice. Reviewers noted that syllabi provided explicit definitions or explanations of this goal and then it was clear how that thread carried through readings and course activities and assignments. Reviewers also commented on the depth of reflection and analysis in the exemplary student work, including attention to power, students' own identities, and an exploration of multiple, divergent perspectives.

| Portfolio Rating | Number of Portfolio |
|---|---|
| **Minimal** (the portfolio indicates the expectation for learning was met minimally, if at all) | 2 |
| **Meet Expectations** (the portfolio showed that the course provided opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning related to diversity, equity and social justice) | 4<br>5 portfolios were rated between meets and exemplary (Meet +) |
| **Exemplary** (the course syllabi, assignments, and activities consistently and clearly provided opportunities for students to demonstrate learning related to diversity, equity, and social justice. This course is an example for others) | 2 |

- Reviewers rated student work samples as exemplary more often (5 courses) than they rated syllabi, assignment instructions, or the overall course as exemplary.

| Portfolio element | Number exemplary |
|---|---|
| Syllabus | 1 |
| Assignment instructions | 3 |
| Student work samples | 5 |

- When courses or elements were rated as minimal, there were a couple of things going on. The syllabus often didn't have the goal explicitly stated or included the old version of the goal. There were also instances where the syllabus seemed to indicate the goal was addressed, but the student work did not provide the best evidence that the goal had been met.

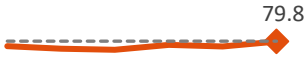
# SENIOR CAPSTONE ASSESSMENT

## 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**

◆ = highest percent

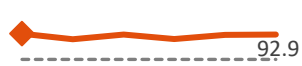
| | | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2661 | 2862 | 2513 | 2274 | 2559 | **2137** |
| The community work I did helped me to **better understand the course content** in this Capstone. | | ◆ 90.8 | 89.9 | 89.2 | 90.2 | 88.8 | **89.1** |
| I feel that the community work I did through this course **benefited the community**. | | 87.3 | 87.3 | 86.1 | ◆ 87.7 | 83.3 | **87.2** |
| I felt a personal responsibility to **meet the needs of the community partner** of this course. | | 88.6 | 87.5 | 88.4 | 88.3 | 86.8 | ◆ **90.5** |
| I was **already volunteering in the community** before taking this course. | | 46.3 | ◆ 47.3 | 44.9 | 43.1 | 43.6 | **42.6** |
| I improved **my ability to solve problems** in this course. | | 76.3 | 76.4 | 76.7 | 77.7 | 77.6 | ◆ **79.9** |
| This course helped me **understand others who are different from me.** | | 84.8 | 84.0 | 84.5 | 85.6 | 85.5 | ◆ **86.2** |
| My participation in this Capstone helped me to **connect what I learned to real life situations**. | | 89.0 | 88.1 | 88.5 | 88.4 | 87.8 | ◆ **89.2** |
| This course **enhanced my communication skills** (writing, public speaking, etc.). |   | 77.5 | 76.2 | 75.7 | 78.1 | 77.4 | ◆ **79.8** |
| I will **continue to volunteer or participate in the community** after this course. | | ◆ 75.2 | 74.5 | 71.4 | 71.3 | 70.9 | **69.3** |
| This course **enhanced my ability to work with others** in a team. | | 82.5 | 81.6 | 81.5 | 79.9 | 82.6 | ◆ **82.6** |

# SENIOR CAPSTONE ASSESSMENT



Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

♦ = highest percent

| | | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2661 | 2862 | 2513 | 2274 | 2559 | 2137 |
| In this course **I improved my ability to analyze views from multiple viewpoints.** | | 85.6 | 84.9 | 84.4 | 85.5 | 84.4 | **86.6** |
| This course **explored issues of diversity** (such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation). | | 79.9 | 77.0 | 77.1 | 80.6 | 76.8 | **79.9** |
| I believe this course **deepened my understanding of political issues.** | | 66.9 | 63.4 | 64.9 | 69.8 | 64.4 | **67.8** |
| The syllabus clearly described how the **course content connected to the community work.** | | 86.8 | 84.3 | 84.1 | 84.8 | 82.0 | **83.5** |
| I believe this course **deepened my understanding of local social issues.** | | 83.7 | 82.4 | 81.3 | 84.6 | 79.7 | **83.3** |
| I now have a better understanding of how to **make a difference in my community.** | | 80.7 | 80.3 | 78.9 | 81.3 | 79.3 | **81.3** |
| I had the opportunity to apply skills and knowledge gained from my major. | | 80.6 | 77.8 | 79.7 | 78.6 | 81.0 | **81.8** |
| I had the opportunity to engage **with students from different fields of specialization.** |   | 93.4 | 90.5 | 92.9 | 90.6 | 92.8 | **92.9** |

# SENIOR CAPSTONE ASSESSMENT

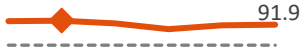
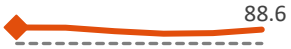
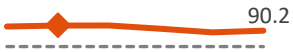
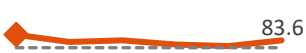


## The Senior Capstone Faculty

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

Percent of students who agreed or strongly agreed

◆ = highest percent

| | | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2661 | 2862 | 2513 | 2274 | 2559 | **2137** |
| Showed a personal **interest in my learning**. | 91.0 | 92.2 | ◆ 93.0 | 91.4 | 89.3 | 89.8 | **91.0** |
| Scheduled work at an **appropriate pace**. | 89.1 | 89.3 | ◆ 90.9 | 88.6 | 88.0 | 85.8 | **89.1** |
| Provide **clear instructions** for assignments. | 82.4 | 86.3 | ◆ 86.6 | 84.2 | 82.0 | 80.2 | **82.4** |
| Created an atmosphere **that encouraged active participation.** |  91.9 | 93.9 | ◆ 94.2 | 92.7 | 89.3 | 91.6 | **91.9** |
| Presented **course material clearly.** | 86.2 | 88.9 | ◆ 90.0 | 86.9 | 84.9 | 84.0 | **86.2** |
| Created an atmosphere that helped me feel **personally engaged** in my learning. |  88.6 | ◆ 90.0 | 89.9 | 87.6 | 86.1 | 86.5 | **88.6** |
| Provided **helpful feedback.** | 85.4 | ◆ 86.5 | 85.2 | 83.7 | 82.6 | 82.1 | **85.4** |
| Related course material **to real-life situations.** |  90.2 | 93.5 | ◆ 93.5 | 91.5 | 89.1 | 90.2 | **92.5** |
| Encouraged **interaction outside of class.** | 86.7 | ◆ 88.1 | 86.0 | 84.6 | 82.2 | 84.7 | **86.7** |
| Provided **clear grading criteria.** |  83.6 | ◆ 86.4 | 82.8 | 83.7 | 81.6 | 80.8 | **83.6** |

## REFLECTION

This year's data demonstrates that students continue to benefit from engagement in community-based learning (CBL) Capstones through building relationships with community partners and applying their knowledge in the community. Students continue to report through mid-quarter and end of term assessments that the instructor plays a key role in the success of a capstone through their ability to communicate effectively with students, to further academic learning through content delivery, to facilitate in-depth discussions and to craft a well-organized syllabus to guide students through their CBL experience. Student comments in the mid-quarter feedback process point to the importance of the faculty's role in pacing as students navigate the various aspects of a CBL course

Capstone courses, through their specific themes and partnerships, elevate students understanding of the experience of a variety of marginalized communities. Through classroom discussions, students develop an appreciation for a variety of perspectives on the course themes and strengthen their ability to engage sensitive topics across difference. The community-based experience in conjunction with intentional course reflective activities plays a significant role in helping students take notice of their own social identities and learn about others' identities. Finally, students commented about learnings related to group process with specific requests for more attention on to how to improve communication among team members, as well as occasionally seeking more direction, clarity and support from the instructor. The group aspect provided students an opportunity to work together to think critically about and address real challenges as they develop final product to meet the need of their community partner.

## ACTION STEPS

This year the Capstone Office is committed to deepening our teaching and learning practices related to the UNST goal of Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice (DESJ). We plan to dedicate our Fall Workshop to addressing this goal and starting to help faculty think about the relationship between DESJ goal and the new Ethics, Agency, and Community learning goal. Zapoura Newton-Calvert, our Capstone Faculty Development Coordinator plans to offer two faculty "work sessions" in fall term to support faculty in directly addressing these goals in their syllabi and in their course activities woven throughout their Capstones.

The Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice rubric describes a UNST program that is on the forward edge of equity and inclusion in teaching and learning practice; to fully lean into what is asked instructors, we plan to deepen faculty learning in the following areas:

* Historical and Contemporary Contexts
*Critical Self Reflection
* Models/Frameworks/Concepts used to frame social justice learning

We plan to launch focused work on these three areas through a local and indigenous perspective with a Capstone faculty development workshop on historic trauma with Jillene Joseph from the Native Wellness Center and would ideally continue this work through this academic year. We are imagining the following work for our program and hope to engage in the following activities in the year ahead (pending funding):

* FALL: Full Day Workshop with Jillene Joseph on Trauma-Informed Teaching & Decolonizing the Classroom
* WINTER: Follow Up Pedagogy Conversation and Practice Group (facilitated by Black Indigenous Person of Color expert with historical trauma/equity/inclusion focus). This is important to de-center whiteness in the Capstone Program.

* Faculty Reading & Pedagogy Group (Fall, Winter, Spring). This will be faculty-led.

Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View (edited by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and Wayne Yang)

Toward What Justice: Describing Diverse Dreams of Justice in Education (edited by Eve Tuck, and Wayne Yang)

Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds (Adrienne Maree Brown)

Finally, we will attempt to revise the Capstone course evaluation form to improve the wording to more directly address the DESJ goal and the Ethics, Agency, and Social justice goal.

# WRITING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

## TOOLS AND METHODS

### FRINQ End-of-year Survey

*Purpose*: As part of the end of year survey, students were asked to report on the types of writing they produced in the course along with the kinds of writing support they received. We also ask FRINQ students to tell us whether they see themselves as a stronger writer now than they were at the start of the year and why. The results provide information to individual faculty about their course and to the program about students' overall writing experience in FRINQ.

*Method*: During the final three weeks of each term during the 2018-2019 academic year, FRINQ students completed the End-of-term survey. This on-line survey was administered during mentor sessions. 825 students responded to the survey. The answers to the open ended question about whether students see themselves as stronger writers at the end of the year were coded as *yes, no,* and *neutral* and some broad, recurrent themes were identified.

### SINQ End-of-term Survey

*Purpose*: As part of the end of term survey, students were asked to report on the types of writing they produced in the course along with the kinds of writing support they received. The results provide information to individual faculty about their course and to the program about students' overall writing 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 on-line survey was administered during mentor sessions. 3184 students responded to the survey.

### IELP Partnership Course

*Purpose*: During the 2018-19 AY, the Intensive English Language Program (IELP) and UNST continued to work together to increase support for multilingual students in UNST. The term "multilingual" describes students who speak more than one language and grew up mainly using a language other than English. It encompasses international students, refugees, and generation 1.5 students. The term multilingual, which is commonly used in academic writing, embraces the view that students' linguistic background and skills are assets to their own learning as well as that of their classmates. This year, we expanded the Multilingual Lab course to officially include both FRINQ and SINQ students. The change fulfills the need for additional support for multilingual SINQ students and reflects the fact that SINQ students were enrolling in the course even after they had completed their FRINQ.

*Method*: The IELP and UNST have continued to develop a multifaceted partnership that 1) supports multilingual FRINQ and SINQ students through a 2-credit course titled Multilingual FRINQ/SINQ Lab; and 2) provides additional support for FRINQ/UNST faculty and mentors through both workshops and 1:1 meetings. We continued to promote and increase enrolment in the Multilingual FRINQ/SINQ Lab course by speaking to faculty and advisors on a consistent basis. As part of their professional development role, the instructors for the Multilingual FRINQ Lab (who are IELP faculty members) contacts all of the instructors who have students in the course so that they can confer on students' assignments and their work, and she makes herself available to other UNST faculty who might need support.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

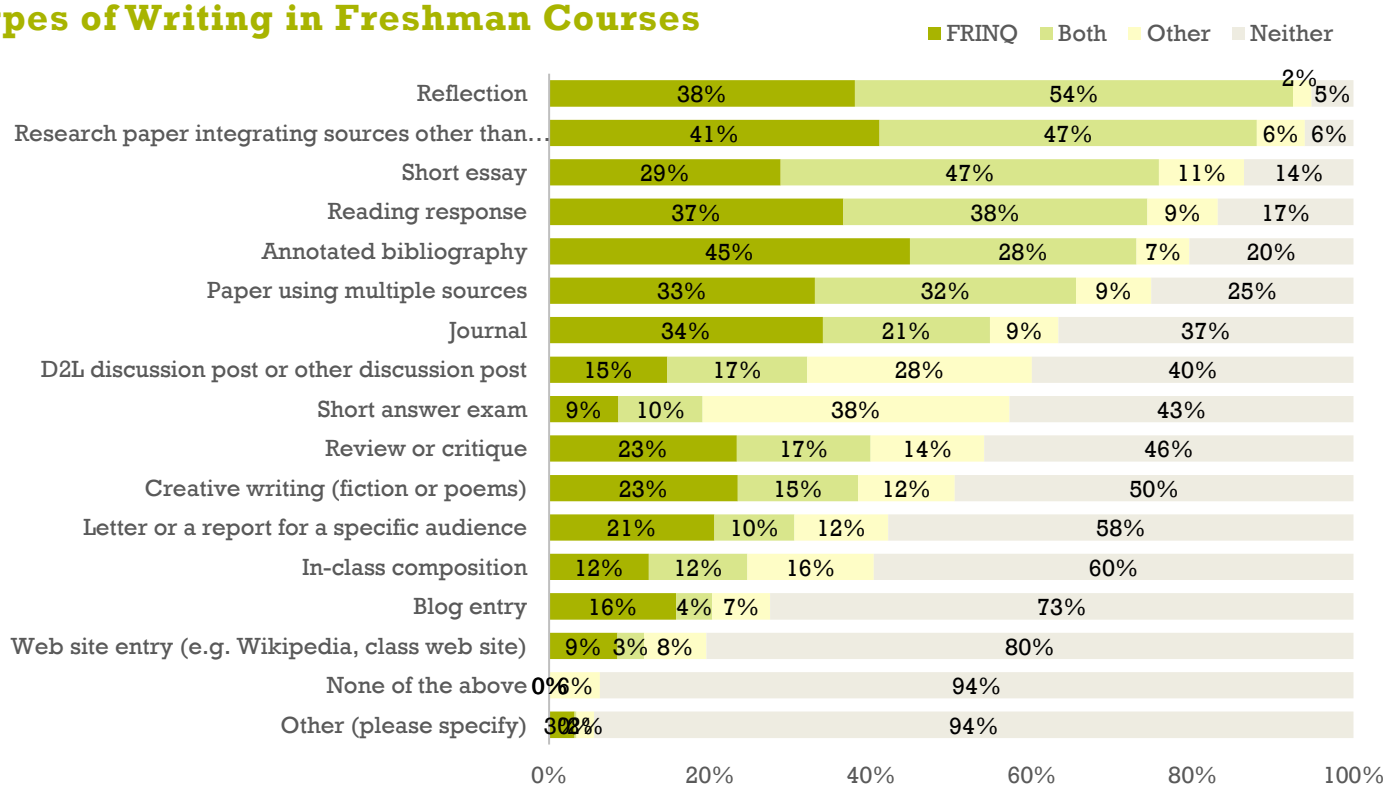
### FRINQ End-of-year Survey

*Types of Writing*: On the end-of-year survey for FRINQ courses, students were asked what types of writing they had done in their FRINQ course and in other courses over the academic year. More than 75% of FRINQ students reported that they had produced reflections, research papers, short essays, reading responses, annotated bibliographies and essays using multiple sources. The most common writing assignments reported for courses outside of FRINQ was short essays, reflections, and research papers. Across all types of writing, FRINQ students were more likely to produce the writing for FRINQ than in other classes with the exception of short essay exams and D2L posts.

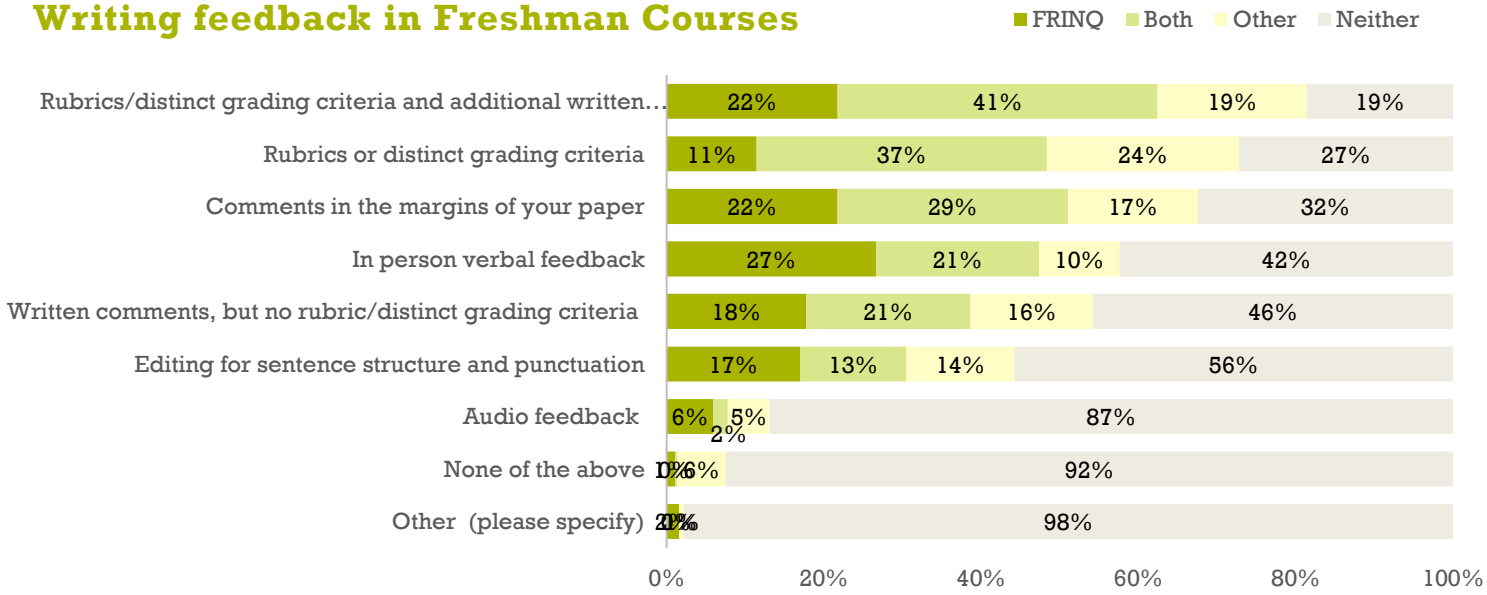
*Types of Feedback*: When asked about the ways in which they received feedback on their writing, 81% of FRINQ students reported that their instructor used a rubric or specific criteria coupled with comments. For most feedback types the rates were similar across FRINQ and other courses. However, students reported that their FRINQ faculty provided in-person verbal feedback more often than their other faculty. They reported that their other faculty more often used a rubric or grading criteria without comments than their FRINQ faculty.

# WRITING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

## Types of Writing in Freshman Courses




## Writing feedback in Freshman Courses




Percent of surveyed students indicating the type of feedback received

*Student Perception of Writing*: **Slightly over 75% of FRINQ students answered with a clear "yes."** Those who elaborated on why they felt their writing was stronger generally identified the following elements that they found beneficial: practice (the amount of writing they did); writing in different contexts and formats; development of research and critical thinking skills; and learning how to integrate and cite sources. Notably, several students noted the role of feedback from both faculty and their peers, and several also mentioned the importance of the writing process (e.g. drafting) to their work.

**Approximately 12% of FRINQ students answered that they did not see themselves as stronger writers**. Some students mentioned that they did not feel challenged in regards to their writing, and others specifically mentioned the fact that they had taken AP or other advanced classes in high school and didn't feel they learned anything new.

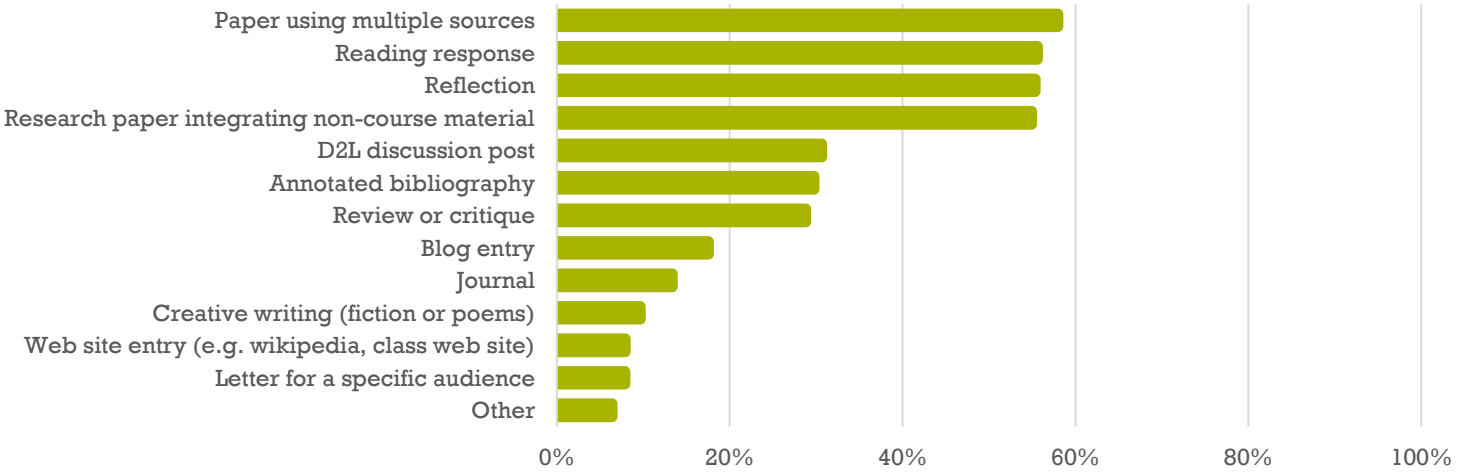
**The remaining student answers were coded as "neutral."** These answers included everything from possible joke answers (e.g. "Yes. I am good at typing") to vague answers such as "Sure" or "I think so" or "Slightly."

## SINQ End-of-Term Survey

When students were asked about the types of writing they produced in their SINQ courses, they most frequently reported producing papers requiring multiple sources, reading responses, reflections, and research papers. Most categories were within 3% of the previous year. Modest gains were seen in Annotated bibliography (up 3%), Blog entries (up 2%), and Creative Writing (up 1.4%). Several categories saw declines in the percentages from last year, with the most notable in D2L discussion posts (down 7%) and Reflection (down 5.5%), followed by Reading response (down 3.8%), Research paper integrating sources other than course readings (down 3.1%), Journal (down 3%), and Review or critique (down 2.9%).

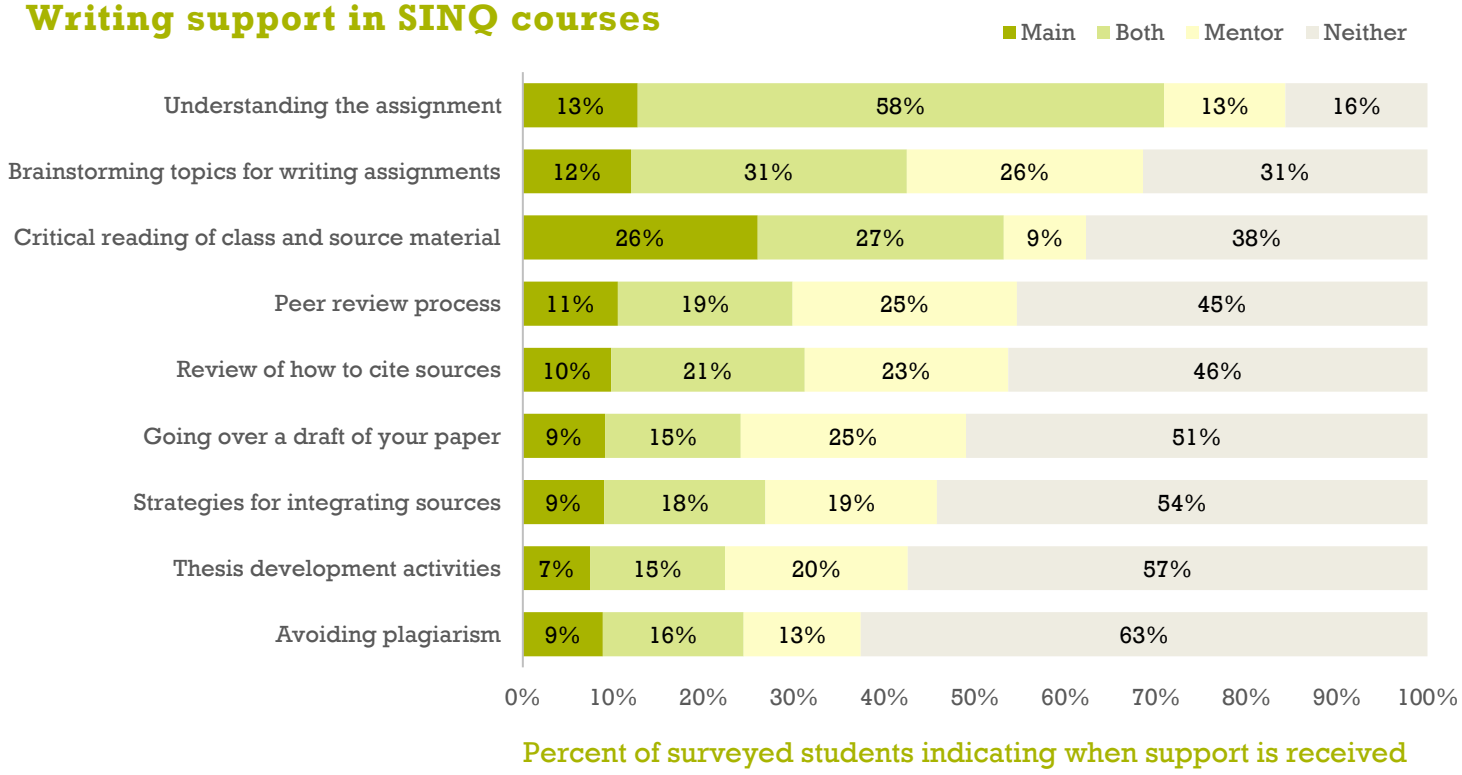
Support for student writing in SINQ may take many forms and can occur in both main and mentor sessions of the course. The most frequent activities in main session were help with understanding the assignment and critical reading of course materials. Although these activities remain the most frequently reported writing activities in main session, both decreased from 16-17 by 7% and 22%, respectively. The most frequently occurring activities in mentor session were brainstorming topics, peer review processes, and help understanding the assignment. These also decreased from 16-17, by 9% for understanding assignment and 20% for brainstorming and peer review. More than half of the student surveyed reflected that neither the instructor nor the mentor sessions engaged them in draft paper reviews, strategies for integrating sources, thesis development activities, or avoiding plagiarisms.

### Writing tasks in SINQ courses




Percent of surveyed students indicating type of writing completed

## Writing support in SINQ courses




## REFLECTION

### About the Results

Our data continues to provide us a general snapshot of the kinds of writing students are producing in their classes, as well as the types of feedback and support students receive from their peers and instructors. Though our ePortfolio assessment this year did not focus on our Written Communication goal, our yearly data helps inform our understanding of they types of writing students are assigned in their courses and the degree to which they feel supported as writers.

Our data shows us that students are asked to write in a variety of styles and formats in both their FRINQ and SINQ courses, as well as in their other courses. This is an important element of our written communication rubric since it encourages students to consider context, purpose, and audience, and to develop a level of flexibility in their writing. Our data also indicates that, outside of essay exams and D2L posts, students were more likely to produce writing in FRINQ than in other courses. The findings indicate that FRINQ courses help students produce more elaborated forms of writing that involve a writing process. A comprehensive view of this year's data also highlights the role of feedback in writing. Students indicated that FRINQ instructors were more likely to provide feedback using both rubrics/grading criteria and written comments, as opposed to rubrics/grading criteria without individualized feedback. FRINQ instructors were also more likely to provide in-person verbal feedback. When asked whether or not they felt they were stronger writers at the end of their FRINQ, several students noted the importance of feedback in helping them to improve as writers.

Data gathered from our SINQ courses indicates that students in those courses are not consistently receiving an optimal degree of support and guidance in relation to writing. As noted above, slightly less than half the SINQ students indicated that they worked with drafts of their paper in either main or mentor session, and even less self-reported that they participated in other important activities (strategies for integrating sources, thesis development activities, and avoiding plagiarism).

# WRITING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

SPECIAL

## About the Assessment Process

In the years where we are not able to assess the Communication goal, it is important to have self-reported data from students that provides some indication of the kinds of writing activities they did and how they view themselves as writers. Though the data gives us far from a full picture, it does help us notice trends over time.

## Action Steps

**Continue to support SINQ faculty with integrating writing instruction**: In AY 2018-19, we were able to offer SINQ Course Development workshops to SINQ instructors in spring term. These workshops offer SINQ instructors the opportunity to work together to define the objectives of their course and develop meaningful assignments based on those objectives. Faculty receive a small stipend for their work, which involves committing to three 2-hour workshop sessions, and developing and sharing a major assignment. These workshops are particularly beneficial to adjunct faculty who might have a harder time interacting with colleagues on a regular basis.

**Develop ways to more fully examine the role/amount of feedback and the writing process.** Research and our own findings indicate that these are two essential elements to strong writing instruction and support. It would be helpful to explore the following questions: What kinds of feedback are useful to students? What are the ways that writing is scaffolded in UNST classes? What elements of the writing process are effectively implemented?

**Continue to evaluate the role and impact of the Multilingual FRINQ/SINQ Lab:** Each year, UNST and the IELP collaborate to produce a report on the Multilingual Lab. We recently developed specific students evaluation questions for that class and hope to be able to make use of that data. We also work to gather data from the FRINQ instructors that have students in the class and we would like to increase the number of FRINQ instructors that respond to the call for feedback.

**Work with multidisciplinary team to revise the Communication goal:** In AY 2018-19, a subcommittee of the University Studies Council began the process of revising the Communication goal. This goal, which includes both Written Communication and Quantitative Literacy, no longer reflects the work that we are doing in either of those areas. Furthermore, the existence of what is essentially two goals under one heading can be confusing for both students and faculty. In spring 2019, the subcommittee, with the help of the Director of Assessment and Research, came to the conclusion that we should divide the goal into two separate goals. In AY 2019-20, the subcommittee will develop an inclusive process to carry out this revision and formulate language for the goal(s).

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & SOCIAL JUSTICE FOCUS GROUPS

SPECIAL

## TOOLS AND METHODS

### Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice Focus Groups

*Purpose*: As UNST continued to focus on the revised Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice learning goal, we wanted to learn more about students' experiences with the goal in their UNST courses. While we collect quantitative data from course evaluations, review student comments about their learning, and score student work using a rubric, none of those approaches tell us how students experience this goal in their classrooms. We wanted to know what students thought about the value of the goal, the instructor approaches that were helpful and whether they felt their identities were being included in the course materials and activities.

*Method*: During winter term, a sample of students who were enrolled in FRINQ, SINQ, and Capstone courses were invited to participate in focus groups related to the DESJ goal. We offered a $10.00 incentive for participation. During spring term, a team of trained undergraduate researchers facilitated seven hour-long focus groups with 22 students. The facilitators asked questions about the value of the goal to the students, times when DESJ learning opportunities were facilitated smoothly and times when they were not, relationships with classmates, and advice to UNST. The undergraduate researchers transcribed the focus groups and participated in analyzing the text for themes, which are presented below.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The students who participated in the focus groups represented FRINQ (6), SINQ (11), and Capstone (5) levels of the program. Twelve participants identified as female, six identified as male, two identified as trans, and two identified as non-binary. Two students identified as Native American, three as Hispanic/Latinx, two as Black, three as Asian, and fifteen as White. Eight students were aged 18 or 19, 10 were between 20 and 22, and the rest (4) were 25 or older.

One the next page, we represent the themes that emerged from the research related to the students, the classroom experiences that supported or did not support learning related to our DESJ goal, and faculty practices that supported or did not support learning related to the DESJ goal.

### DESJ Topics/Content

We presented students with the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice learning goal and asked them to report on topics or content from their courses that represented that goal. Students reported topics such as:

- Social Justice
- Identity (Intersectionality)
- Power structures (privilege/structural violence)
- Class
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Race/racism

  Environmental Justice

A few students reported that they didn't know about the goal at all or that they hadn't seen the goal in their courses.

### Value of the Goal

*Career*: When asked why PSU would select DESJ as one of four general education goals or to describe the relationship of the goal to their education or career, some students reported a direct relationship between the goal and the work they were intending to do:

- *I hope to work in a school setting, so I think that this will teach me to look at every individual as a whole and not categorize them by what other people say.*
- *I want to be an author and eventually go into journalism so being able to at least have a partial understanding of what somebody who isn't me thinks and lives is really important.*

Other students observed that they would have to work with people from an array of backgrounds when they finish school, so the goal supports their ability to succeed in those environments.

- *Any job you get or career..you're going to be working with people in business or public. Everyone's different, you have to be able to create equity.*
- *I think it's very helpful with being able to see past stereotypes and be more accepting.*

*Broadening Perspectives:* Other students noted that PSU is a place where they encounter a great deal of diversity and have broadened their understanding of others, which is valuable to them.

- *We are diverse people and we have different backgrounds even in this room, different gender identities, we are all different, so I think that these classes help us expand our knowledge and interact with different groups so that we are not just in one bubble.*

- *It opens up eyes to things going on and motivates and creates space and can create change and understanding of others and opening up to different perspectives so that everything's not so narrow.*

*Privilege*: In discussing broadening perspectives, several students noted learning about privilege.

- *For me, we learned a lot about privilege and I come from like a conservative town like I'm a white so it's just like dismissed and so like actually understanding how privileged impacts in such like a deep way and like just completely changes other people's lives because of that is not just like Oh I'm white so I have some privilege it's like so deeply rooted and so many things we do and that was very eye-opening to me..*
- *To understand that there are different identities in the world, not use our biases against that or understand privilege behind where you are in life and the intersectionality of it all.*

*Window Dressing*: A few students suggested that this goal was adopted because PSU wants to look good.

## Learning Experience

We asked students about an impactful learning experience related to the DESJ goal, what learning environment is most effective for them, and what helps build relationship with other students.

*Community Guidelines:* Classroom guidelines were named by several students as critical to their learning.

- *"practice nonviolent communication or yeah what it was and just how to approach someone when-no making any accusations of how they're feeling. Just ask, what's going on. Introduced it, content on it. She required it all quarter, it was great.*
- *"My professor came up with a code of conduct for the whole class to make sure that we respected each other."*
- *I mean, again for me it was that the code of conduct we all came together to put it up. We all made guidelines of how we would all respect each other.*

*Course material*: Students mentioned course material and activities on specific topics such as gentrification or environmental justice.

- *The whole thing was was a learning experience related to critical thinking and solving the social justice element of it. Putting together information about*
- *communities of color and their access to environmental quality.*
- *The videos, the reading links..She did a really good job of finding, not just a one sided perspective. It helped you think critically and apply it to what you were doing in the class.*

*Privilege and Power:* Students described experiences in class when privilege was presented in ways that helped them really understand it.

- *Actually understanding how privilege impacts in such a deep way and completely changes other people's lives…it's so deeply rooted in so many things we do and that was very eye-opening to me.*
- *Examining power relationships, if we are really going to dive into analyzing identity. That has been huge for me.*

*Peers:* Although we didn't explicitly ask about the impact of peers on their learning, many students named their classmates as critical to their learning and understanding the DESJ goal.

- *"I definitely had a that moment where somebody totally changed the context of you know, responding to my post and that was like, 'I was totally not thinking that way"*
- *The professor has just one perspective in a group and I learned more from other people on my group just because there's a bigger variety of people.*

*Relationships:* Classroom relationships helped form the foundation of trust which enabled difficult conversations.

- *In our class, our classmates were like super close cuz the professor does a lot of empathy exercises and like mindfulness exercises and stuff that forces you to kind of get personal with each other…*
- *Being in mentor session helped with building community and just a sense of belonging.*

*Identity:* We asked students about whether their identities were represented in their courses. Some students had that experience and others did not.

- *Mental illness doesn't come up … the only time that I really feel like that came up was when classmates did a presentation on it and they did a really good job but it shouldn't have been just my classmates*

- *Being in the queer community, I felt empowered when the teacher talked about my identity in the classroom. I felt more comfortable to speak up during those discussions.*

## Faculty

We asked students what their faculty did to facilitate their learning, support classroom community, and manage difficult conversations.

*Model:* Faculty modeled engagement with Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice and provided models so that students could see how others grapple with the material.

- *I think that what I recall from that was that he would present different points of view. He showed a video too, about someone who changed their point of view through time. That was really cool.*

*Responsiveness:* Students felt valued when the faculty took a clear interest in their perspectives and feedback.

- *So the instructor took the feedback and asked the next class their thoughts to change it and everyone voted yes to change the material. So respecting students perspectives*
- *an instructor took an idea a student had given and he continued to incorporate that idea to the class and that was very powerful to see how that Professor was so receptive of the student feedback*

### *Students as "humans"*

- *She was very big on keeping up with mental health, making sure you got sleep and just general well-being"*
- *She would never make it feel like she was writing it off*

*Facilitation:* Students noted the importance of facilitation in creating discussions where respectful disagreement can happen.

- *my teacher was good about trying to validate each person's point of view and remind us that we are in a very liberal bubble like PSU tends to skew liberal so like it's important to know what the other side is saying… I give them major props for doing that but like yeah just basically to look at everything in a respectful way I guess you don't have to agree with them but just like let people have space to talk*
- *they facilitate a lot of class discussions which I felt like really contributed to my learning because people could, not like argue, but people were having a lot of disagreements and jut hearing people work out their thoughts and disagreements was super powerful for me.*

*Avoidance:* When asked about a time a faculty member handled a difficult conversation well, some students didn't have an example and provided examples of how their faculty avoided the issue.

- *Yeah but the professor really didn't handle it and anyway so she actively avoided like handling that*
- *I haven't really experienced that in like face-to-face I think that that was really able to happen and they were really able to say so many negative things because it was just online and so it was easier for them to just be like whatever instead of face-to-face.*

## Classroom community

We asked students about times when they felt a sense of community with their peers and what helped support that.

### *Comfort/Safety*

- *just like really doing things to get people to be comfortable with each other first I think is a good stepping stone towards being able to learn better because of everybody's awkward you're not going to be able to learn anything because nobody is like talking.*

## REFLECTION

These focus group responses add depth and perspective to the other assessment findings related to the Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice learning goal. It is encouraging that most students articulated the value of the goal to their lives and future careers and did not consider it window dressing, although a few did. Students' responses reveal the importance of the classroom environment when introducing and grappling with potentially difficult topics related to social justice, oppression, and elements of identity. The faculty has an important role in helping the class develop and honor ground rules, providing opportunities for students to get to know each other so that they are comfortable in difficult conversations, and in providing content that reflects many perspectives. One insight that mirrors findings from the analysis of course evaluation comments is the importance of peers when it comes to learning about Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice. Peers provide a host of perspectives and lived experiences that enrich students' understanding of the course topics and themselves.