

# PROGRAM ASSESSMENT GRANTS

2018  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY



# INTRODUCTION

To promote best practices in program-level assessment of student learning outcomes, in Winter 2018 the Office of the Provost established the WSU Program Assessment Grant program. The call for proposals invited Wayne State University faculty and staff to submit proposals to improve their academic or student services program's assessment efforts. These one-time funds were available to assist in the piloting, creation, or significant revision of assessment instruments or processes, or to obtain professional development in program assessment.

Proposals were reviewed by a committee of faculty and staff volunteers who are experienced assessment practitioners from across campus. At least two reviewers independently evaluated each proposal using a rubric, and then reviewers met to discuss all reviews and proposals and to rank the proposals. Priority was given to proposals with multiple participants that introduced innovative or experimental approaches to direct assessment or improved practices in student learning outcomes assessment at the program level, especially those that might serve as models for other programs.

Seven projects were funded; each project's goals, activities, and impacts are summarized in the pages that follow. Some highlights among the projects' work to improve their programs' assessment practices include:

- Professional development to build expertise in assessment
- Engagement of colleagues and students in redeveloping and operationalizing program learning outcomes or redesigning assessment instruments and processes
- Introduction or development of new assessment tools
- Use of assessment discussions to guide curricular planning
- Expansion of innovative assessments into new program contexts
- Development of a multi-method approach to understanding program impact on student learning and student success

For more information about the grant program, please see the [WSU Program Assessment Grants](#) page.

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## Exit Survey for Chemistry Undergraduates

**Recipients:** Andrea Matti and Regina Zibuck, Chemistry

**Description of project goals:** An exit survey was proposed for the department to gain perspective on students' views of the academic, research and service they were offered as a graduate of our department. A final diagnostic exam was also proposed to track students' chemical knowledge before graduation. The Wayne State Chemistry department is ACS (American Chemical Society) certified, therefore, we are using ACS certified exams to assess the students' knowledge of concepts.

**Project activities:** The exit survey was completed; however, responses have been very low. Between both semesters we have received a total of 5 exit surveys. Now that the exit survey is complete we plan to send it out much sooner in the semester and will be more diligent in sending students reminders and incentives (such as t-shirts) to complete the survey. We have given the full year General Chemistry exam for two semesters and have posted the results to our assessment report.

**Changes to project plan:** The DUCK exam has not been completed but will be in Winter 2020. The instructor of the course we planned to place the DUCK exam in did not have an extra lecture to give the exam and therefore was not comfortable taking the class time away. We agreed if it is written in the syllabus before the class starts it will be better for the instructor. We will plan to do that.

**Program-level impact:** We have been looking at the results of ACS General Chemistry exam to note the concepts our students are having difficulty with. We are also evaluating their scores to see if the curriculum we have currently needs to change. Our sequence of General Chemistry courses may be changed due to the results of the ACS exam.

**Individual impact:** The project has given me insight into A. how to assess a program and B. how to evaluate the responses. Writing an exit survey gave the recipients a chance to review the program and what aspects we felt were most important to our students. We also learned a great deal of the chemical knowledge of our students via the General Chemistry exam.



## Getting More Specific: Engaging Stakeholders to Move from Competencies to Learning Outcomes

**Recipients:** Shirley A. Thomas, Joy Ernst, and Neva Nahan, Social Work

**Description of project goals:** The overall goal of this proposal was to enhance the process of assessing both the explicit and the implicit curriculum of the WSUSSW, which will ensure that students are able to demonstrate the integration and application of the competencies in their social work practice. There were three objectives to this proposal:

1. To develop clear student learning outcomes for each competency.
2. To refine the Field Instructor Assessment of Student Competencies (FIASC) instrument.
3. To develop new benchmark assignments that accurately reflect the learning outcomes of the program.

### **Project activities:**

1. Scheduling of classroom and existing group activities - Completed November 2018
2. Conducting small group exercises - Completed January - April 2019
3. Transcription of Responses - Completed March - May 2019
4. Analysis and writing up results - Completed June - August 2019

**Changes to project plan:** The tasks we have not completed thus far are below. Both of these tasks were to be finished in the fall semester (2019). While not completed at the writing of this report, we will present the written results to the full-time faculty at the November faculty meeting. The part-time faculty and additional stakeholders will receive the written report via electronic mail. As stated in our original proposal, the refinement of the FIASC and the benchmarks assignments are to be completed by May 2020.

- Presentation to SSW faculty: Expected November 2019
- Refinement of FIASC and benchmark assignments: Expected May 2020

**Program-level impact:** It is premature at this point to list the assessment practice changes the school will make given the results of this project. However, the project has already helped the team recognize how the faculty prioritize elements of the ten competencies and how this can be used in student learning outcomes. Presently the faculty is in the process of reviewing and updating the curriculum. Themes that emerge from this analysis will also be helpful in this review process. For example, the most popular faculty-identified behavior related to the CSWE Competency 3 "Advance Human Rights and Social and Economic Justice" was "Apply and integrate social justice concepts and strategies to practice." With respect to Competency 3, the faculty will focus on reviewing the curriculum for how we are defining and teaching concepts related to social justice and strategies for achieving social justice as part of social work practice.



WSUSSW is going through a rather extensive curriculum evaluation and change. Decisions will determine the direction of the both the BSW and MSW programs. How do we ensure that the program encompasses our professions' values, as well as the ideals of the faculty in teaching and preparing social workers for the future? The results of this project will be a tremendous asset in this change process.

**Individual impact:** This project enabled me as a program coordinator to become even more familiar with the social work competencies and to determine elements of the different competencies that the faculty and stakeholders consider priority. In addition, our team will present the findings at the Council of Social Work Education in Denver, CO, October 2019. It is also our intention to complete and submit one journal article for publication by December 2019.



## Who is Assessing the Assessments: Improving Student Learning Outcomes for Communication Studies

**Recipients:** Anita Mixon, Brandon Hensley, and Denise Vultee, Communication

**Description of project goals:** The overall goal of the project was to examine the assessment tools that the Communication Studies program uses and understand what assessment tools failed to or successfully addressed the overall learning outcomes as outlined by the courses. To do this, participants undertook professional development to design and pilot an assessment tool to measure growth in student learning outcomes from Gen Ed courses through completion of the major.

### **Project activities:**

- Attended IUPUI Assessment Institute
- Submitted midpoint progress
- Assessment instruments distributed
- Assessed COM 1010, COM 2110, COM 3400

**Changes to project plan:** Did not assign student assistants. Due to limited availability, raw data was sent to the project lead, Anita Mixon, and instructors of record submitted their assessment information to project lead.

**Program-level impact:** Communication Studies has consistently approached assessment carefully and thoughtfully. One of the areas that we, as a program, could improve upon is making sure that the courses that are multi-section/multiple classes of the same course and taught by multiple instructors (including graduate teaching assistants), have a uniformity of experience. That is, we want students, regardless of instructor, to achieve the same learning outcomes at the end of the course. Feedback from course evaluations demonstrated that the student experience was varied based on instructor. As a result of the project, we are now taking a closer look at multi-section courses (outside of COM1010)/multiple classes of the same course and piloting a standardization of course materials.

**Individual impact:** In terms of individual impact impact, the role of students in the assessment process is a lot more important since the professional conference and the review of the course materials to ensure that they are clear and transparent.



## Development and Implementation of a New Capstone Course with Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) Prior to Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences in a Pharm.D. Program

**Recipients:** Justine Gortney, Brittany Stewart, Joseph Fava, and Francine Salinitri, Pharmacy Practice

**Description of project goals:** Curricular goal: To develop and implement a successful P3 capstone course where students could utilize their cumulative pharmacotherapeutic-related knowledge and skills to evaluate patient cases and practice-related problems. Here, the students' preparedness for advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs) could be evaluated. The P3 course could have significant student assessments in it surrounding disease states and pharmacy practice, communication, and pharmacist skills. A high-stakes objective structured clinical exam (OSCE) could also be incorporated in the course.

Assessment goal: To assess whether or not the course was effective and if associated assessments better prepare students for APPEs and board exam performance.

**Project activities:** We met our curricular goal and part of our assessment goals. Regarding the development and implementation of the OSCE process, our team worked feverishly during the months of June 2018 through February 2019 to develop two sets of cases for a 4-station OSCE launched in March 2019. In addition, other quality assessments were developed for the course and focused on specific content mapped in the program related to controlled substance evaluation, infectious disease and pharmacokinetic dosing of drugs, general pharmacy calculations, parenteral nutrition, medication therapy management, anticoagulation, narrow therapeutic drugs and drugs in pregnancy, and communication skills (presentation). Course effectiveness was evaluated looking at a comparison of student progress between the formative and summative OSCEs (all 4 stations showed improvement between formative and summative), course review, and student/faculty input.

**Changes to project plan:** As part of our long-term plans, we are still awaiting assessment data for advanced pharmacy practice experiences and board exams to evaluate. Given the students' matriculation in the curriculum, these will be available for follow-up summer 2020.

**Program-level impact:** Our program's assessment practices have been elevated with the addition of a pre-APPE, OSCE assessment of pharmacist-specific skills (medication history taking, counseling on over-the-counter medications, dosing of medications based on kidney function, and community medication order review) and summative evaluations of other pharmacy specific topics. This now occurs at a critical time in the curriculum-before the students launch to the P4 clinical, APPE year. We have met a long-term curriculum goal that will be valued by our stakeholders and accreditation body.

**Individual impact:** This project has had a potential increase in scholarship for our course faculty. Dr. Gortney is presenting a 20-minute overview at the regional IUPUI Assessment Institute. Several members of the course faculty will be developing an abstract for submission at the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Meeting in 2020 as well as a manuscript.





## Interprofessional Collaboration Assessment of Physical Therapy Students in their Final Clinical Experiences

**Recipients:** Martha Schiller and Kristina Reid, Physical Therapy

### **Description of project goals:**

1. Initiate an interprofessional collaboration assessment tool in the Physical Therapy Program to meet the needs of a new interprofessional education accreditation criteria.
2. Educate Clinical Instructors (CIs) on the Interprofessional Collaborator Assessment Rubric (ICAR) tool as part of the course assessment for PT 8800/8820.
3. Support the development of educational materials to promote the professional development and education of our clinical instructors on the new ICAR tool as part of the assessment procedure.
4. Analyze the assessment data to determine the interprofessional collaboration behaviors of our final year students and their readiness to participate in interprofessional practice in the clinical environment.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of our current Interprofessional Education (IPE) curriculum as part of the educational requirements required by our accrediting body. Assist PT Program to determine if current IPE experiences need to be modified with other intentional interprofessional experiences to ensure that the interprofessional collaboration behaviors of our students are at the expected levels, as determined by our clinical instructors in the clinical environment.

**Project activities:** The Interprofessional Collaborator Assessment Rubric (ICAR) was added as part of the course requirements for PT 8800/8820 in the summer and fall of 2018. M.Schiller attended the APTA Educational Leadership Conference held in Jacksonville, FL. Attendance at this conference provided participation in several interprofessional educational sessions to ensure contemporary knowledge in current interprofessional educational practice. This conference also provided collaboration with experts and networking opportunities.

Development of educational program session, in-service and educational handouts to train clinical instructors on the ICAR tool. These options were made available to CIs to ensure they were familiar and trained on the assessment tool.

An educational session titled "Interprofessional Experiences for PT Students ... Developing CIs as Interprofessional Collaboration Champions" was developed in Aug and presented Sept 12, 2018 at the MPTA Clinical Education Consortium Clinical Educator's Professional Development Day; 10 CIs from our WSU pool of CIs were offered the opportunity for professional development and sponsored to attend the educational and training session for free (10 of total of 82 clinical educators that attended).



Assessment data was analyzed to determine the interprofessional collaboration behaviors of our final year students and their readiness to participate in interprofessional practice in the clinical environment. Data collection was carried out for 2018 PT 8800/8820 and compared to pilot data of 2017. Midpoint report of grant progress was submitted in Feb 2019. Abstract for poster presentation was completed and submitted Sept 20 for the EACPHS College Research Day which is to be held Oct 16, 2019. Poster created and submitted for printing on Sept 30, 2019. Final report of all grant-related activities was submitted on Sept 30, 2019. Dissemination via poster presentation at the EACPHS College Research Day is scheduled for Oct 16, 2019.

**Changes to project plan:** Initial plans were to submit an abstract for a poster presentation at MPTA 2019 &/or CSM 2020. It was decided by the team to present at the college level so that our data could be compared to 2 other schools (GVSU and UM-Flint) and an abstract would be submitted for MPTA 2020 and CSM 2021 that included all 3 PT programs. In addition plans were to initiate a manuscript with the WSU data. It was decided that a paper would have greater value with the combined data from WSU, GVSU and UM-Flint. Plans are in place to have this accomplished in 2020.

**Program-level impact:** Assessment analysis helped to determine the interprofessional collaboration behaviors of our final year students and their readiness to participate in interprofessional practice in the clinical environment. It also provided needed program assessment to determine if our current interprofessional collaboration experiences (ie. CHIP, DEW, IPTV) needed to be modified/ augmented. The use of this tool assisted in providing the assessment to ensure that the interprofessional collaboration behaviors of our students were at the expected levels, as determined by our clinical instructors in a clinical environment. The process of data collection provided additional data for our IPE criteria needed for our program accreditation process. This was helpful during our recent accreditation team site visit in April of 2019.

**Individual impact:** The experience of writing a grant was exceptionally educational for M. Schiller. The process of a consultative meeting with Cathy Barrette prior to submission was extremely helpful. This initial consultation gave me additional insight from many different perspectives. This resulted in the proposal being rewritten with the feedback and suggestions incorporated. Overall this was an excellent learning opportunity in scholarship activities as a small grant writer. This grant provided professional development opportunities and support for the role of clinical educators in the Physical Therapy program for assessment of Interprofessional behaviors. This grant provided the PT Program with valuable information which has begun a shift in the paradigm of clinical education. It has provided the Program Director (K. Reid) with a tool for ways to look at the curriculum and develop purposeful Interprofessional learning using measurable learning outcomes. This grant gave access to funds otherwise not available for clinical education. Grant supported professional development with attendance at a national conference.



## HIS 1001 – Defining What It Means to “Think Historically”

**Recipient:** Jennifer Hart, History

**Description of project goals:** Recent disciplinary shifts in history with respect to methodological and skills-based approaches to teaching have implications for the program's learning outcomes and assessment methods. As such, the project's goal was to obtain professional development and expert guidance for faculty in articulating learning outcomes for introductory history that will carry through to final program outcomes. Doing so also provides the foundation for assessing student progress both within a particular course and through student progress across the program or major.

**Project activities:**

Invited guest, Dr. David Pace, president of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, co-developer of “Decoding the Disciplines”, and emeritus faculty in History at Indiana University, led workshops for History faculty at WSU.





- Pre-workshop activity: Faculty submitted examples of bottlenecks in teaching in the history program.
- Workshop Part 1: Faculty addressed the broader issues of bottlenecks and student learning within the major. The conversation that emerged was incredibly productive, raising important points about what we ethically owe students, the limits to pedagogical intervention and planning, and the differences in approach that exist within the discipline.
- Workshop Part 2: Faculty who were interested in teaching the HIS 1001 course worked directly with Dr. Pace to identify learning outcomes and goals for the course. Here, in other words, working backwards from existing assessment practices and looking for bottlenecks and roadblocks to student success facilitated new conversations about what "historical thinking" means and what kinds of skills we seek to assess and track among History majors. This process also allowed us to articulate the values that would be foundational to historical thinking and discuss how to embed those in an introductory course.
- Creation of HIS 1001: Introduction to History, which has been proposed as a permanent course and approved by the Undergraduate Studies Committee. It is under evaluation by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
- Pilot of HIS 1001: Introduction to History, offered as HIS 1610, in Fall 2019.

**Changes to project plan:** Because of a delay in the departmental discussion of the status of the required course, we do not yet have a final version of the revised departmental assessment plan. However, Jennifer Hart and the new Director of Undergraduate Studies, Bill Lynch, have discussed what this might look like and will move forward with the assessment plan revision in the Fall term.

**Project-level impact:** The most immediate outcome of the project is the creation of HIS 1001: Introduction to History, which has been proposed as a permanent course. The Undergraduate Studies Committee approved the course at the end of Winter 2019, and it is currently under evaluation in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. A pilot of HIS 1001 (HIS 1610 – syllabus attached) is being taught by Jennifer Hart this semester, in order to think through the structure of the course and demonstrate how it might be adapted by individual faculty working in different content (geographical region, theme, time period) areas, as per request from individual department faculty members. At the October 25th meeting of the departmental Undergraduate Studies Committee, we will return to the discussion of whether this course can/should be included as a required course for the major/minor in History and what such a requirement will look like.

Backward planning with a focus on bottlenecks is not a conventional way to approach assessment, perhaps, but it was essential to building department culture and capacity around the assessment process and its connection to pedagogical practice and curricular structure. This process has highlighted the need to shift in departmental assessment from a focus on writing mechanics to one of historical thinking/analysis skills.



It also highlighted the necessity of creating an assessment rubric and benchmarks/standards that shift as students progress through the degree (in contrast to the current model, which uses the same rubric for both intermediate and capstone courses and merely aggregates scores). Thanks to the workshop we held with David Pace, we will be better positioned to think about what this revision will look like and discuss our expectations for student progress through the degree.

**Individual impact:** Jennifer Hart will present the HIS 1001 framework and process at a pre-conference workshop she organized at the American Historical Association Annual Meeting in January 2020. She is also working with David Pace to draft a journal article about this process and the final product for submission to a scholarly journal. Hart's Fall 2019 HIS 1610 course – the pilot course for HIS 1001 – will be open for visitors during Warrior Teaching Days.



## Wayne State University Writing Center Tutees: Who Uses the Center, Who Does Not, and How Does Use Impact Students' Academic Success?

**Recipients:** Jule Thomas, WRT Zone and English  
Ruth Boeder, Sarah Primeau, and Clare Russel, English  
Carly Cirilli and James Lee, Computing and Information Technology

**Description of project goals:** To better understand WRT Zone users' needs and the impact that the center's services have on student learning, the project's goals were to improve the consistency and robustness of assessment data. To that end, staff set out to develop a process to systematically collect information about student users' needs and the services they utilize, and to pair that information with institutional indicators of student success. Improving the center's assessment process through these goals can inform tutor training, tutoring practices, materials development, outreach, and future funding requests to better serve Wayne State students. To achieve these goals, the WRT Zone and C&IT collaborated to adapt WAMS to accommodate WRT Zone scheduling and tracking needs and create a report to pair student use data with STARS information. The WRT Zone also sought support for data analysis to compare student use and non-use of writing center appointments with respect to academic success.

### Project activities:

1. WAMS scheduling and implementation: Adaptation of the WAMS system to meet WRT Zone needs was completed in August 2018, followed by training and implementation for WRT Zone staff and online tutorials for students. Further modifications extended the appointment calendar, enabled recurring appointments, added a tracking feature to identify the status of appointments (waiting, in progress, completed), and allowed waitlisting.
2. COGNOS reporting system: C&IT collaborated with WRT Zone staff to develop a report able to aggregate and extract user demographics and WRT Zone use and availability data. The report would provide data for the analysis phase of the project. The project lead (Jule Thomas) and a graduate assistant with a background in statistical analysis completed COGNOS training in preparation for data analysis.
3. Data analysis: The project lead received training in SPSS and data analysis from the graduate assistant, completed descriptive statistics collaboratively, and then carried out other analyses of the data independently. Key results include descriptions of the user population:
  - A large majority of users are undergraduate students, followed in smaller numbers by graduate and professional students. Research indicates that these groups have different needs, with undergraduate support focused on standard English, use of relevant examples, organization, staying on topic, and lexis. Graduate students additionally focus on discipline-specific writing, effective summarizing and paraphrasing, producing a substantial quality and quantity of writing, and use of prior knowledge and points of view to support, analyze and refine ideas.
  - A large majority of users are continuing students, followed in smaller numbers by first-time and transfer students.



- International students and permanent residents use WRT Zone services at a lower rate than other students.
- First generation students schedule tutoring sessions at a substantial rate, but attendance is low.
- Women schedule more tutoring sessions than men.
- Students from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences comprise almost half of the WRT Zone's users, followed by Education, Business, and other schools and colleges at lower rates. Users therefore represent humanities and non-humanities disciplines.
- Users had higher than average SAT scores and GPAs.
- The WRT Zone serves more minority (74%) than white (26%) first-generation students.
- First-generation students who use tutoring sessions have a similar distribution of SAT scores as the general WSU student population.
- Analysis of SAT scores and GPAs by race provided little actionable information about use of tutoring.

**Changes to project plan:** Due to unforeseen difficulties with access to COGNOS, the COGNOS reporting and data analysis timelines were delayed. As a result, the graduate assistant was unable to carry out all of the analyses, and the planned CHAID analysis was not completed.

**Program-level impact:** Data about the user population for tutoring sessions indicates that the WRT Zone should continue outreach to all groups, while increasing outreach to professional, first-time, first-generation and transfer students. They also suggest a need for specialized tutors and tutoring practices to meet the range of writing needs, including those of students whose first language is not English and students in non-humanities disciplines. The high percentage of minority student users underscores the WRT Zone's collaboration and partnership with support programs serving minority students.

Descriptive and correlational analyses from the project indicate that gender, race, SAT scores, and GPA were statistically significant factors in tutoring sessions. Future assessments and analyses should include a mixed methods approach to better understand why participation among particular groups is higher, whether other students are aware of the WRT Zone's services, and whether the services provided match non-users' needs.

The high participation in tutoring by first-generation students with higher than average SAT scores suggests an opportunity to recruit future writing tutors from that population, which could potentially enhance outreach to other first-generation students.

**Individual impact:**

Work on the assessment project provided scholarly, professional, and institutional impacts. The project drew from an award winning writing center article on student use and non-use (Salem, 2016). While our project was unable to replicate the methodology of Salem's study, our team was able to develop, pilot, and test the methodological framework for future data collection and analysis of WSU student use and non-use. We are confident that our future work on our assessment project will add to the growing need for RAD research in writing centers and of student use and non-use. We plan on publishing initial and future findings. Professionally, our work has been presented at writing center conferences and a WSU brown bag talk. A proposal has been submitted for the 2020 Associate for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education. Finally, our work has provided us with institutional support and collaboration. Prior to our work, we were unaware of departments of assessment and of analytics. Our work with Catherine Barrette, James Lee, and Carly Cirilli has provided us with the opportunity to realize our assessment goals and to continue our work on a larger scale.