

EWU Programmatic SLO Assessment

AY 2014-15 and “Closing the Loop” for AY 2013-14

Introduction:

Assessment of student learning is an important and integrated part of faculty and programs. As part of ongoing program assessment at Eastern Washington University, each department is asked to report on assessment results for *each* program and *each* certificate for *at least one* Student Learning Outcome (SLO) this year. To comply with accreditation standards, the programs must also demonstrate efforts to “close the loop” in improving student learning and/or the learning environment. Thus, this template has been revised into two parts.

Resources:

Check this site for sample reports (created with the previous year’s template) by EWU programs and other assessment resources: <http://access.ewu.edu/undergraduate-studies/faculty-support/student-learning-assessment/program-slo-assessment.xml>

Additional resources and support are available to:

- 1) Determine whether students can do, know or value program goals upon graduation and to what extent;
- 2) Determine students’ progress through the program, while locating potential bottlenecks, curricular redundancies, and more; and
- 3) Embed assessments in sequenced and meaningful ways that save time.

Contact Dr. Helen Bergland for assistance with assessment in support of student learning and pedagogical approaches: hbergland@ewu.edu or 359.4305.

Use this template to report on your program assessment. **Reports are due to your Dean and to Dr. Helen Bergland (hbergland@ewu.edu), Office of Academic Planning, by Nov. 2, 2015.**

Degree/Certificate:

Major/Option:

Submitted by:

Date:

Part I – Program SLO Assessment Report for 2014-15

Part I – for the 2014-15 academic year: Because Deans have been asked to create College-Level Synthesis Reports annually, the template has been slightly modified for a) clarity for Chairs and Directors, and b) a closer fit with what the Deans and Associate Deans are being asked to report.

1. **Student Learning Outcome:** The student performance or learning objective as published either in the catalog or elsewhere in your department literature.

Differentiate between the concepts of racism, prejudice, and discrimination: and, understand how lives are situated in or impacted by these concepts

2. **Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** Indicate whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.

_____ SLO is met after changes resulting from ongoing assessments, referencing assessment results from the previous year to highlight revisions;
xx SLO is met, but with changes forthcoming;
_____ SLO is met without change required

3. **Strategies and methods:** Description of assessment method and choices, why they were used and how they were implemented.

Writing, Reading and Research methods are applied with the following intent and implementation.

- Writing is used for purposes of reflection, action, and participation in academic inquiry.
- Engage in Reading for the purpose of reflection, critical analysis, decision-making and inquiry.
- Research involves applying methods of inquiry and conventions to generate new understanding(s)

General Assignments: 1) one brief paper 2-3 pages, 2) an article review 1-2 pages, 3) mid-term exam consisting of true/false statements and brief essays, and 4) final paper 8-10 pages, possibly with a presentation depending on the course level.

4. **Observations gathered from data:** Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #3.

- a. Findings: Overall, students enjoyed the courses and averaged a 3.2 GPA
- b. Analysis of findings: The following factors have and may continue to impact our findings: 1) RCST is a relatively new major and minor, 2) an RCST major and minor is offered with somewhat different course expectations, 3) lower and upper division courses attempt to provide a consistent and coherent RCST philosophy and methodology, which shapes and/or engenders various pedagogies.

5. **What program changes will be made based on the assessment results?**

- a) Describe plans to improve student learning based on assessment findings (e.g., course content, course sequencing, curriculum revision, learning environment or student advising).

As the new RCST Executive Director, I am currently collecting all course syllabi for the 2014-2015 academic year and critically assessing our overall mission, goals, curriculum, SLOs, course evaluations, and student performances. Once this assessment is completed, the RCST faculty and advisors will meet and discuss the aforementioned items. Second, we will meet with our majors and minors in an informal, yet academic setting, to learn from their educational experiences as RCST majors and minors.

- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.

Timeline: 2015-2016

-November 2015: critically engage/interrogate RCST philosophy, mission, and goals (currently constructing an RCST website, which should be completed for initial approval by December 2015)

-December 2015: Assess student performances and evaluations via professors and SOAR. Create longitudinal data base; quantitative and qualitative measures.

-December 2015: collect syllabi for all RCST classes taught to date; assess current curriculum and provide necessary revisions, additions and/or deletions.

-January 2016: RCST Faculty and Staff Retreat; collective decisions regarding curriculum and relevant/qualified faculty primarily from EWU and possibly other nearby institutions, if needed.

-January 2016: submit course revisions, additions, and deletions to CPAC for approval

-February 2016: RCST Faculty and Staff Retreat; summary of work completed to date, student professional services to be offered beginning 2016 spring quarter; ie. general

logistical information include the RCST MAP, internships, conferences, graduate school and other employment opportunities.

6. Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed and an evaluation of the assessment plan/process itself.

Description of revisions as suggested by results:

Given the reading and writing demands of RCST courses, we are working closely with the Writing Center by focusing on grammar construction and organization of written assignments, which includes descriptions/information regarding explanations and discussions of the paper; for example, introduction, literature review, general analysis, etc. In general, the nature of RCST requires reading and writing tasks be completed with comprehensive efficacy. This process is then complemented with a specific pedagogy(s) focusing on the relationship between the readings and written assignments.

Opportunities for students to *critically engage in reading materials via written assignments and class discussions* appear to be most productive via small groups and accompanying dialogues with the remainder of the class. We have also found students enjoy and are most productive working collectively on course projects. Related to this pedagogical technique is the role of the faculty member. More specifically, the faculty member must be able to engage in the 'why' of the material or theoretical implications of the readings and student's subsequent written understandings of course materials. Students need to complete reading and written assignments with a critical knowledge in understanding social conditions influenced or shaped by class, race, gender, and sexuality.

Hence, our results suggest RCST majors and minors, like their EWU student counterparts, have difficulty with writing in general and critical written assessments in particular.

Evaluation of assessment plan/process:

In order for students to successfully meet the aforementioned RCST SLO, a clear and continuous working relationship must be established with the Writing Center and the JFK Library to assist with research endeavors, specifically literature reviews. Second, a critical assessment of RCST faculty also renders attention focusing on their strengths and potential contributions to the overall assessment plan. Simply being a racialized ethnic scholar does not guarantee the necessary capacities that are conducive to the success of the RCST major/minor and EWU students.

RCST curriculum needs clarity and continuity, which can be accomplished via a concise MAP and critically revisiting our on-line courses. On-line courses may actually undermine the student's progress as a critical scholar of Race and Culture Studies as the nature of the discipline calls for the (de)construction and (re)construction of critical discourse, which is

extremely difficult to accomplish via cyberspace. To date, many students have stated they learned how to negotiate computer detail, with little time to truly assimilate course materials.

NEW: PART II-CLOSING THE LOOP

Given this is our first major/minor assessment report, and the Executive Director's tenure began in fall, 2014, I am not able to address Part II-Closing the Loop. (Please advise

NEW: PART II – CLOSING THE LOOP
FOLLOW-UP FROM THE 2013-14 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT

In response to the university's accrediting body, the [Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#), this section has been added. This should be viewed as a follow up to the previous year's findings. In other words, begin with findings from 2013-14, and then describe actions taken during 2014-15 to improve student learning along, provide a brief summary of findings, and describe possible next steps.

PLEASE NOTE: The College-Level Synthesis report includes a section asking Deans to summarize which programs/certificates have demonstrated "closing-the-loop" assessments and findings based on the previous year's assessment report.

Working definition for closing the loop: *Using assessment results to improve student learning as well as pedagogical practices. This is an essential step in the continuous cycle of assessing student learning. It is the collaborative process through which programs use evidence of student learning to gauge the efficacy of collective educational practices, and to identify and implement strategies for improving student learning.* Adapted 8.21.13 from <http://www.hamline.edu/learning-outcomes/closing-loop.html>.

1. **Student Learning Outcome(s)** assessed for 2013-14

2. **Strategies implemented** during 2014-15 to improve student learning, based on findings of the 2013-14 assessment activities.

3. **Summary of results** (may include comparative data or narrative; description of changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, etc.): Describe the effect of the changes towards improving student learning and/or the learning environment.

4. What **further changes to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery**, etc. are projected based on closing-the-loop data, findings and analysis?

Definitions:

1. **Student Learning Outcome:** The student performance or learning objective as published either in the catalog or elsewhere in your department literature.
2. **Overall evaluation of progress on outcome:** This checklist informs the reader whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.
3. **Strategies and methods used to gather student performance data,** including assessment instruments used, and a description of how and when the assessments were conducted. Examples of strategies/methods: embedded test questions in a course or courses, portfolios, in-class activities, standardized test scores, case studies, analysis of written projects, etc. Additional information could describe the use of rubrics, etc. as part of the assessment process.
4. **Observations gathered from data:** This section includes findings and analyses based on the above strategies and methods, and provides data to substantiate the distinction made in #2. For that reason this section has been divided into parts (a) and (b) to provide space for both the findings and the analysis of findings.
5. **Program changes based on the assessment results:** This section is where the program lists plans to improve student learning, based on assessment findings, and provides a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year. Programs often find assessment is part of an ongoing process of continual improvement.
6. **Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed.** Evaluation of the assessment plan and process itself: what worked in the assessment planning and process, what did not, and why.

Some elements of this document have been drawn or adapted from the University of Massachusetts' assessment handbook, "Program-Based Review and Assessment: Tools and Techniques for Program Improvement" (2001). Retrieved from http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online_handbooks/program_based.pdf