Assessment of Course Student Learning Outcomes

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<th>COURSE ALPHA/NUMBER:</th>
<th>Semester/Year: Spring 2010</th>
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<td>HIST 232: WI/Modern European Civilization II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructor: Malia Lau Kong</td>
<td>Date Submitted to Department Chair: 11/10/10</td>
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Identify the Course Student Learning Outcomes assessed this semester.

SLO #3: Describe and analyze the processes that shaped modern Europe (e.g. nationalism, imperialism, colonialism, migration, decolonialism, etc.).

How do the above course SLOs align with the Associate of Arts or certificate program-level outcomes?

SLO #3 supports the following A.A. degree Learning Outcome:

3. Use research & technology skills to access information from multiple sources; use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to evaluate and synthesize information to form conclusions, ideas, and opinions.

HIST 232 SLO #3 supports the above A.A. degree Learning Outcome in the following ways:

1. In order for students to produce a 5—7 page research paper on the processes of nationalism and imperialism, they must use the library and internet to find primary & secondary sources that will support their research. Students are expected to find at least 7 primary sources, and 2 secondary sources for their paper.

2. Furthermore, students must create their own thesis for this research paper on nationalism and imperialism. In order to support this thesis, students must evaluate evidence and synthesize information that they have gathered from the primary & secondary sources they found in the library and on the internet.

3. Lastly, in the process of completing this research paper, students are using critical thinking and problem-solving skills in order to support their theses and arrive at their conclusion.

What skills or competencies are necessary for the student to perform the selected SLOs?

In order to perform SLO #3, students must be able to do the following:

1. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
2. Evaluate primary and secondary sources.
3. Synthesize information from multiple sources in order to form an argument.

*Example:* As stated in my HIST 232 syllabus, students must write “a 5—7 page research paper that analyzes the rise of modern Germany, focusing primarily on Bismarck’s unification of Germany and German nationalism & imperialism.” In writing this paper, students are expected to quote or paraphrase from at least 7 primary sources and 2 secondary sources. Furthermore, they must identify these primary and secondary sources in order to determine their worth / credibility. Lastly, student use the information gathered from these sources to support their theses and arrive at conclusions.

What instructional methods or materials are used to prepare the students?

Students are prepared to perform this SLO in the following ways:

1. Class lecture.
2. Class discussion.
3. Short writing assignments in which they identify and summarize primary and secondary sources.
4. Use of the required textbook and course reader.
What assessment task(s) or tools are being used to assess the outcomes? What are the criteria for success?

1. Knowledge Survey: Students are given a knowledge survey in the beginning of the course that assesses whether they are able to, in their own opinion, meet SLO #3. The same knowledge survey is then given at the end of the course.

2. Embedded Assessment: Students must complete a 5—7 page research paper on the processes of nationalism and imperialism and earn at least a “C” grade.

What are the results of the assessment?

1. Knowledge Survey Results:
   a. Pre-Knowledge Survey: 13 students said they are “unable to” to describe & analyze the processes that shaped modern Europe (1 point response); 3 students said they are “somewhat confident in their ability” to do this (2 point response); 2 students said they are “confident in their ability” to do this (3 point response). The numerical value of all these responses total 25 points. When this number is divided by 18 students who responded, the value becomes 1.38 points. In other words, 46% (1.38 / 3 = 0.46) of the students felt they were able to meet SLO #3.
   
   b. Post-Knowledge Survey: 0 students said they are “unable to” to describe & analyze the processes that shaped modern Europe (1 point response); 4 students said they are “somewhat confident in their ability” to do this (2 point response); 9 students said they are “confident in their ability” to do this (3 point response). The numerical value of all these responses total 35 points. When this number is divided by 13 students who responded, the value becomes 2.69 points. In other words, 89% (2.69 / 3 = 0.896) of the students felt they were able to meet SLO #3.
   
   c. Conclusion: In relation to SLO #3, more students felt that they were able to meet SLO #3 more so at the end of the semester than at the beginning.

2. Embedded Assessment Results: The 5—7 page research paper on the processes of nationalism and imperialism was the 2nd research paper (out of 3) that students were required to do. Out of the 15 students who completed the paper, the average score was a “D” or 62%. The breakdown is as follows: 2 students received an “A”; 3 students received a “B”; 5 students received a “C”; 2 students received a “D”; 3 students received an “F”.
   
   a. Conclusion: 66% of the students received a “C” or better for this assignment. In other words, only 66% of the students were able to demonstrate their ability to meet SLO #3.

How will you use the results? What changes do you propose to improve student learning? When?

The results bring to mind the possibility that knowledge surveys are not the best assessment of student learning. After all, based on my results, students were a lot more confident in their ability than they demonstrated in an actual assignment.

I am still pondering what changes to make in order to improve student learning. This is one of the reasons why I am not teaching this course in Spring 2011 as I needed to take a break from teaching this writing-intensive course in order to reflect on the changes that need to be made. One of the possibilities I have thought about is teaching this course as a regular course, and not as writing-intensive. After all, one of the reasons why students scored so poorly on their research paper is because of their inexperience at writing history papers. Hence, if I teach this course again as a WI, I am thinking of requiring the students to purchase a guide to writing history papers so that they can use this as reference. Also, I am thinking that I will need to incorporate the use of non-structured writing assignments in order to make sure that students understand the material at a basic level. Furthermore, the next time I teach this course (probably Spring 2012), I will use PowerPoint Presentations in order to cater to visual learners.
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<th><strong>Will the changes require funding? How much will the changes cost?</strong></th>
<th>No.</th>
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Submit this form to your department chair for inclusion in End-of-the-Year (EOY) department reports.

*The results of the assessment are not used for promotion or tenure.*