Closing the Loop: Using Assessment to Improve Student Learning
2013-2014 Highlights

Study of Religion, B.A.

Outcome(s) Assessed
- Demonstrate an ability to reflect critically and empathetically on the subject
- Have knowledge of the beliefs, practices, and worldviews of major living religions
- Have skills that are highly valued by employers; able to relate the major to career and future goals

Methods & Artifacts
- National survey of alumni conducted by the American Academy of Religion

Data-Informed Action Plan
- Low scores in ‘Understanding religious beliefs in a global context’
  ○ Added a tenure-track faculty member who has special interests in religion and politics
  ○ New faculty member will be teaching a course on this topic
- Low scores in ‘Working effectively with persons different than yourselves’
  ○ Added programming through Explorers of Religion that brings students together
  ○ Supported students in obtaining community connections, such as internships
  ○ Instituted mandatory group advising with a focus on explaining the importance of co-curricular involvement

Public Relations, B.A.

Outcome(s) Assessed
Students will understand the theoretical, strategic, and practical aspects of practicing in the field of public relations
- History and theory
- Research methods
- Culture
- Ethics
- Skills

Methods & Artifacts
- COMMPR 1811 quizzes
- COMMPR 4855 written campaigns
- COMMPR 4811 quizzes essays, campaign development and portfolio creation
- COMMPR 4822 case studies
- COMMPR 3855 case studies, writing projects

Data-Informed Action Plan
- Need for more specialized course content
  ○ Coordinated learning goals across course curriculum, added breadth and depth to existing courses
- Emergence of social media analytics
  ○ Added social media analytics into the Public Relations Campaign Methods Course
  ○ Emphasized the use of analytics across the workforce

Interior Design, B.A.

Outcome(s) Assessed
Aligned with Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) standards
- Knowledge of design theory as indicated by understanding of the design elements and principles
- Awareness of concept development and execution
- Creativity of solutions
- Technical skills as indicated by lettering, hand-drafting, overall appearance, layout, and craftsmanship
- Depth of understanding of projects demonstrated by the use of design vocabulary

Methods & Artifacts
- Review of student portfolios

Data-Informed Action Plan
- More evidence of meeting CIDA standards needed
  ○ Plan created to collect more student projects, papers, assignments and sketches prior to the CIDA visit in Spring 2016
- Gaps seen in building and environmental systems
  ○ Added a new course addressing this topic
- Desire for additional hands-on learning
  ○ Added experimental assignments in INTDSGN 1001, 2024, and 2125
## Closing the Loop:
### Using Assessment to Improve Student Learning
#### 2013-2014 Highlights

### Special Education, M.A.E.

**Outcome(s) Assessed**
- **Outcome A: Demonstrate knowledge of the research process**
  - Demonstrate knowledge of how research questions are formulated, identify what methodologies and measures are appropriate for these questions, and select procedures that are appropriate for addressing research questions
  - Exhibit the ability to read, interpret, and critique various types of research based articles

**Methods & Artifacts**
- Core research course assignments
- MAE study development
- Field-based assignments
- External review, Spring 2014

**Data-Informed Action Plan**
- Student need for more support on the MAE research paper
  - Research papers are now a topic of monthly meetings
- Additional program marketing needed
  - Formed a committee to identify strategies for marketing
  - Provided reassignment time to implement marketing programs
- Desire to add differentiated coursework and endorsements
  - Identified and supported a faculty member to coordinate a field specialization program

### Electronic Media, B.A.

**Outcome(s) Assessed**
- **History & Theory**: Understanding the historical development of theory and scholarship
- **Research Methods**: Understanding appropriate methodologies to develop knowledge and to examine questions
- **Culture**: Understanding the interconnections among communication, community, and culture
- **Ethics**: Understanding the legal and ethical issues within the industry and adhering to ethical standards

**Methods & Artifacts**
- 25-question survey

**Data-Informed Action Plan**
- Emerging digital technologies
  - Investigated the need to upgrade the EM production system to an HD system
  - Added social media as a topic in ‘Electronic Media Processes and Effects’, ‘Electronic Media and Culture’
  - Created a new course called ‘Communication Technology: Network Society’
- **Student need for more production and performance skills**
  - Students will be required to take the intermediate production course, effective fall 2014

### School Library Studies, M.A.

**Outcome(s) Assessed**
- Use skills and knowledge to assess reference sources, services, and tools in order to mediate between information needs and resources to assist learners
- Develop an articulated information literacy curriculum grounded in research in the information search process
- Understand the process of collecting, interpreting, and using data to create new knowledge
- Employ the methods of research in library and information science

**Methods & Artifacts**
- Collection development assignment
- Practicum visit

**Data-Informed Action Plan**
- Lower scores seen in the introductory portfolio assignment
  - Added a practice assignment earlier in the term
  - Allowed students to get writing assistance and feedback
- Students are seeking greater understanding of information literacy skills
  - Introduced an instructor-developed practice exercise for online search skills
- Difficulties revealed in efficiency of writing, citation styles, and conventions
  - Increased rigor in APA style curriculum in the introductory course and final portfolio
  - Considering purchasing APA manuals for students