AY19 Program Learning Outcome (PLO) Assessment: Civic Engagement

English/Writing

Assessment Type: Academic Program
Year/Term: AY19

Level: WR 393 ol

Learning Outcome: Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Assessment Method/Tool: Program Civic Engagement Rubric

Measurement Scale: 3-1

Sample Size: 14

	Proficient		Adequate		Developing	
	(# of students)		(# of students)		(# of students)	
Applies English Studies skills and capabilities to larger civic & ethical contexts.	14	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Employs English Studies principles to effectively evaluate research & civic experience.	14	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Applies English Studies principles to research & civic experience in order to contribute to the common good.	14	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Means		100%		0%		0%

% scoring 2 or 3   **100%**

Benchmark: **100%**   Institutional benchmark median percentage of students meeting "Proficient" or "Adequate" levels

Median % Achieving Benchmark: **100%**   percentage of students meeting "Adequate" or "Proficient" levels

Closing the Loop Statement

1) <u>Summary</u>

   Two students did not complete the course, so they were not included in this assessment—there was nothing to assess. The other students proved adept at applying key course concepts to larger civic contexts.

2) Analysis of Results
   a. It's not really clear what's being assessed here or what that might tell us about student learning, but perhaps that's unavoidable and/or as it should be. At this point, this outcome seems mostly about having done/applied something or not—not necessarily how well or effectively that something was done or to what ends. If the point is to show if or how often EOU students are asked to apply what they're learning to contexts beyond the classroom, WR 393 can easily be used toward that tally: the final project explicitly asks students to apply a contemporary method of rhetorical criticism to analyze a contemporary public text of their choice. They all did that. Students analyzed texts ranging from the Pendleton Round Up to EOU's attempt to rebrand itself as "Oregon's Rural University" to current films and albums that address issues of discrimination based on race, gender, income, and mental health. They were also explicitly asked to reflect on the ways their project might be considered "interventionist."
   b. The level of depth and sophistication at which students are able to apply rhetorical concepts and methods in this class varies widely. Students who are just beginning to recognize that discrimination may be a "thing," for example, have a completely different frame of reference for reading about and applying culture-centered criticism and feminist rhetorical criticism than students who read queer theory or engage in campus activism in their spare time. It was especially challenging for me to manage the range of student experience this term because I had to move this on-campus section online mid-way through the term, making it more difficult to assess and respond to issues individual students were struggling with in the moment.

Academic Program Action Plan

Students' ability to do whatever we mean by civic engagement in a given course effectively or consistently depends on a whole range of other factors, not the least of which are their mastery of the course content we are asking them to apply and their level of familiarity and comfort with the civic and public contexts to which we are asking them to apply it. This isn't an outcome area that lends particularly well to skillifying or sequencing, in other words, let alone to measuring, without narrowing down much more specifically what our goals are for doing this work.

I suppose one route would be to do that. If, for instance, the primary purpose of civic engagement in the English/Writing degree is to teach students to write effective audience-based prose for professional audiences, we could cut the designation from courses like WR 393 in which the civic/public serves

primarily as a sample problem through which to teach rhetorical concepts and focus only on courses in which students are producing texts in particular genres for outside organizations. If on the other hand the purpose of civic engagement work in an English/Writing major is (or is also) to help build context for understanding contemporary theories of language and meaning, it makes sense to include classes like WR 393 that ask students to train their developing analytical skills on a wide range of public texts. My preference would be to leave the door open to this wider set of courses rather than narrow the scope. However, that probably also means recognizing that civic engagement is neither a stand alone nor easily scaffolded program or general education outcome but instead a diverse accumulation of context-building experiences we aim to provide students for a range of purposes throughout the course of their degree.

AY20 Civic Engagement Improvement Plan Recommendation
(Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Quality)

ENGL/WR's programmatic approach to Civic Engagement is solid in terms of effective assignment design and sequencing of steps, with a clear, exceptionally cogent, insightful, reflective analysis of results and of the outcome and criteria themselves. The assessment demonstrated ENGL/WR's commitment to Civic Engagement, an important feature of the program.

The AY20 ENGL/WR's Civic Engagement Improvement Plan should focus on a programmatic review of its Civic Engagement outcome and criteria in order to reach consensus in purpose and curriculum design. With clear criteria, instructors should be able to determine the level (Proficient, Adequate, Developing) of any given student, highlighting gaps, where the program as a whole can address, since all outcomes are interdependent. For example, can we really separate clear writing from critical thinking? The AY20 CE Improvement Plan should report on the results of these efforts and provide data on a course where the improvements have been operationalized.