Gerontology
Assessment Report – Option 1
2008-2009

1. Program Learning Outcome Assessed in AY 2008-09

For the academic year 2008-09, the Gerontology Program completed an assessment of Learning Outcome #8 – “Exhibits effective written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills with individuals, caregivers, families, and agency staff”.

2. Methodologies Used to Assess Program Learning Outcome

Measures

Program Learning Outcome (L.O.) #8 was assessed both directly and indirectly in Fall 2008 and Spring 2009. Data were gathered from four (4) students’ Capstone Portfolios from three (3) perspectives: faculty, agency supervisors, and students.

Direct and indirect assessment methods were completed using multiple rubrics. Prior to Spring 2009 the (global) GER 195B Portfolio Evaluation Tool (Appendix A1), developed by the Program Director with review and input from gerontology faculty (the program only has part time faculty), was used to assess 1-2 portfolios (Appendix A2) from the Capstone Internship course (GERO 195B) each semester. These were randomly chosen from students graduating from the Program during that semester (average number of students graduating is 8/year). Beginning Spring 2009 faculty began using the (same) tool when reviewing all Portfolios of graduating students’ from GERO 195B each semester (decision from last year’s Assessment). During Summer and Fall 2008, and Spring 2009, the Program Director along with input from gerontology faculty members revised/developed internal course assignment rubrics to use for both student grading and Program Learning Outcome assessment.

At monthly faculty/curriculum meetings Gerontology Faculty determined the following assessment measures (included in the Portfolio) are representative samples for direct assessment of L.O. #8.

a.) GER 195A/B Culminating Senior Community Project Proposal (Appendix A3).
b.) GER 195B Culminating Senior Community Project Presentation (Appendix A4).
c.) GER 195B Field Supervisor Evaluation of Student’s Core Competencies (Appendix A5)

Indirect measures are also included in the Capstone Portfolio and used as partial assessment of Learning Outcome #8. Students complete a self evaluation at the conclusion of the Internship. This evaluation is reviewed and agreed upon by the field supervisor and faculty member. Faculty determined the following evaluation to be representative of a source for Learning Outcome #8:

a.) GER 195B Student Evaluation of Core Competencies (Appendix A6)

Data for this year’s report were collected as in previous years (Appendix A1) from the 4 graduating seniors’ Portfolios and then (this Spring 2009) transferred to the L.O. #8 assessment rubric (Appendix B1) that was developed by the Program Director and discussed (on an individual basis) with available faculty members. It was instituted for the Spring 2009 analysis. As no faculty (all are part time) were available at the end of the Fall and Spring 2009 semesters, the Director completed the Portfolio evaluations. (In previous years some part time faculty have also helped to complete the Portfolio evaluations). The GER 195A/B Culminating Senior Community
Project Proposal and GERO 195B Culminating Senior Community Project Presentations are two faculty-graded sources for Learning Outcome #8.

**GERO 195A/B - Culminating Senior Community Project Proposal (Appendix A3).** The Proposal is the first direct measure and the primary assessment indicator used in Program Outcome assessment of students’ competency in written communication (L.O. #8).

In GERO 195A, students complete a draft of their Culminating Project Proposal (Appendix A3). This Proposal is graded, returned to the student for additions/corrections, and then the final Proposal is graded. The Proposal is then implemented in GERO 195B as the Culminating Senior Community Project.

The previous grading rubric for the Proposal was reconfigured by course faculty during the Fall 2008 semester and instituted in Spring 2009. The rubric is now kept in the student’s file along with the Proposal. This began Spring 2009, therefore only 2 Portfolios were included with these data in this assessment. The grading rubric was configured on a total accumulation of points but is representative of the components of the **Learning Outcome #8 Rubric ~ Effective Communication** (Appendix B2). In order to pass this assignment in this Credit/no credit course, students must minimally score 259 points out of 350. Work in the two students’ Portfolio supported the “pass” criteria.

In order to compare data gathered from the Proposal Rubric, for this analysis using the **L.O. #8 Rubric**, the following conversions were made based on the Project’s total grade:

- Substantial (Highly Competent) = 325-350 points
- Some (Mostly Competent) = 280-324 points
- Little (Needs Improvement) = 259-279 points
- None (Not Competent) = < 259 points

The grading criteria were discussed by the faculty members in the course, then the Proposals were graded independently. After individual grading, the two faculty members met together and discussed the reasoning behind their scores to insure reliability. Scores were then agreed upon and returned to the students with their Proposals. Proposals and grading rubrics were then resubmitted in Portfolio materials at the end of the course. The Proposal rubrics had not been retained for Fall 2008 however, so the only available data (other than Cr/Nr) to report on the Proposals is from Spring 2009 (n=2) (Appendix B2a).

**GERO 195B - Culminating Senior Community Project Presentation (Appendix A4)** is the second direct measure and primary indicator of oral communication used in this **Learning Outcome #8** assessment.

At the end of GERO 195B, the Field/Internship Capstone course, students present their Culminating Community Project to students, faculty, and community agency representatives. The previous grading rubric for the Presentation rubric was reconfigured by course faculty during the Fall 2008 semester and instituted in Spring 2009. It was configured on a total accumulation of points but is representative of the components of the **Learning Outcome #8 Rubric ~ Effective Communication** (Appendix B3). In order to pass this is a Credit/No credit course, students must minimally score 148 points out of 200.

In order to compare data, gathered from the Project Presentation for this analysis using the **L.O. #8 Rubric**, the following conversions were made based on the total grade:

- Substantial (highly Competent) = 180-200 points
- Some (Mostly Competent) = 160-179 points
- Little (needs improvement) = 148-159
- None (not Competent) = < 148
The Proposals were graded independently by the Director and another faculty member who co-teach the course. Then the two faculty members met together and discussed the reasoning behind their scores to insure reliability. Scores were then agreed upon and returned to the students. Presentation Outlines and grading rubrics were then resubmitted in Portfolio materials at the end of the course.

Students complete this culminating course in their last year in the Program. Some take incompletes and thus their Portfolios are reviewed later when they complete the course. Others still have GE to complete the semester after they finished the Internship. So, in addition to the four (4) portfolios (graduating students) used for other areas in this report, faculty were able to retrieve Fall 2008 Presentation Outlines and grading rubrics. Consequently, for this analysis another seven (7) graded Presentations were available from students who completed the course but have yet to graduate. These were available because Presentation grading rubrics are retained in student files, after their Portfolios are reviewed and returned. Eleven scores for Presentation were therefore available for review. Raw data are reported in Appendix B3a.

The third direct measure used in this assessment of Learning Outcome #8 is the GER 195B Field Supervisor Evaluation of Student's Core Competencies (Appendix A5). This measure demonstrates the Supervisor's assessment of student's written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills.

At the end of GER 195B, the Field Supervisor completes the Field Supervisor's Evaluation of Student Core Competencies (Appendix A5). This evaluation is designed to assess the student's abilities in meeting the course objectives (which include the final Program Outcomes) at the completion of GER 195B. Student's skill and competency are rated on a scale of 1-5. These competencies are rated by the Field Supervisor and then reviewed by both the student and faculty member. Agreement among all three evaluators is required for completion of the Capstone course.

In order to compare data, gathered from the Field Supervisor's Evaluation for this analysis using the L.O. #8 Rubric, the following elaborations were made to the original scoring key:

Little (1) = Needs improvement (corresponds to # 1 & 2 on Evaluation)
Some (2) = Mostly Competent (corresponds to # 3 & 4 on Evaluation)
Substantial (3) = Highly Competent (corresponds to #5 on Evaluation)

This Supervisor Evaluation measures a variety of Program Outcomes. In order to pass this Credit/No credit course, students must minimally score a total of 85 points out of 155 on this evaluation. To measure L. O. #8, seventeen (17) specific behaviors were identified from the total evaluation by the Program Director in collaboration with other faculty teaching in the course (Appendix B4). The minimum number of points exemplifying behaviors of L.O. #8, and needed for Credit are 38 points out of 51. Field Supervisor Evaluations were reviewed from four (4) Portfolios. Raw data are reported in Appendix B4a.

The one indirect measure used in this assessment of Learning Outcome #8 is the GER 195B Student Evaluation of Core Competencies – Outcome 8 (Appendix A6) and reflects the student's perception of how well they have met the overall Program Outcome # 8.

At the end of GER 195B, each student completes the Student Evaluation of Core Competencies (Appendix A6). This evaluation is designed to assist the student in assessing their ability to meet core course objectives and Program Outcomes at the completion of GER 195B. Student's critically evaluate their skill and competency levels as Met or Not Met. Descriptions that support students in this evaluation are also seen in their Reflective Journals that are turned in each week during the Internship. These competencies are rated by the student and then reviewed and discussed with the Field Supervisor and faculty member. Completion of this process is required for completion of the Capstone course. No numerical scoring has been instituted for this evaluation. Review shows that all students completed the required objectives.
Findings
Both strengths and areas requiring improvement were revealed through analysis of the direct and indirect assessments used in this Learning Outcome #8 review. Data were gathered and analyzed from the following perspectives: Faculty, Field Supervisor, and Student. Data were gathered using the Individual Data Collection Rubrics for L.O #8 (B2, B3, & B4) and then converted to Summary Tables (Appendix B2a, B3a, and B4a). Summaries of data highlighting where students are achieving expectations along with identified areas for improvement follow.

Culminating Project:
Data show that all students met the overall criteria for passing this project and therefore Learning Outcome #8 at a “mostly or highly competent” level. The reasons for the student earning a lower score were clearly described by the descriptors found on the Appendix B1 form. Reinforcement of the first copy of the Proposal being a working DRAFT with subsequent faculty input should continue this high level of quality upon completion.

Culminating Project Presentation:
Data show that Presentation scores were about the same both semesters. With 10/11 presentations being at or above the “mostly competent level”, expectations were clearly achieved. All students met the overall minimal criteria for passing this presentation and therefore the course and Learning Outcome #8. The reasons for students earning lower scores were clearly described by the descriptors found on the Appendix B2 form. The need for incorporating similar presentation rubrics into other gerontology courses in order to assist students to systematically incorporate needed content in their final presentation was identified by faculty.

Field Supervisors’ Evaluation:
Data show that scores were consistent both semesters, and that expectations achieved. All four (4) students were rated at the “highly competent” level by their Field Supervisors in almost all assessed areas. This more than meets the overall criteria for passing this internship and demonstrating the Learning Outcome #8. Written examples by Field Supervisors and faculty members on student evaluations also elaborated the student’s abilities and skills at this level. One area identified for possible analysis would be comparison with evaluations by field supervisors in the Service learning classes.

Student Self Evaluation:
Review of the four (4) Portfolios show that all students completed the Student Self Evaluation and “met” the required criteria that demonstrated skills and communication abilities in order to pass the course. An area identified for possible future analysis would be to incorporate a student evaluation for the Service Learning Courses.

3. Anticipated Program Changes
Description of proposed changes
The final analysis of these data was completed after the conclusion of the Spring semester, so the findings will be emailed to faculty upon hire and be an agenda item for the first faculty meeting in Fall 2009.

Some examples of proposed changes based on this assessment include:
* Find a systematic way to have Portfolios reviewed by additional faculty.
* Use L. O. #8 rubric for GERO 101, 102 & 103 papers – include in Portfolio for longitudinal comparison.
* Keep Proposal grading sheet in student’s permanent record along with Proposal and Presentation.
* Modify Student Internship Evaluation tool to include numeric scores rather than met/not met.
* Include Reflective Journals as measurement both critical thinking & and writing.
* Considering developing supervisor and student evaluations for Service Learning courses for comparison with final Internship evaluations.
* Consider changing grading rubrics to reflect the same scoring definitions to align with the L.O. analysis.

**Determination of future achievement of results**

Ongoing assessment and next year’s Program Evaluation will be fundamental in determining the Gerontology Program’s success in meeting assessment outcomes. Creativity and willingness of Program (part time) faculty to be actively involved will be essential. In the short term, the Director will work diligently to assure some of the departmental supports are available for faculty when they return (or come) in the Fall. This report will be sent to all faculty as soon as they are hired. Faculty meetings are already planned and schedules for course review are continuing each month. It is anticipated that faculty will contribute as they can to the Program review.

4. **Other Assessment Activities Completed in AY 2008-09**

After discussion of various grading rubrics at monthly faculty meetings, faculty developed or refined existing rubrics and shared them at faculty meetings throughout the year. This paves the way for alignment of these rubrics with Program Assessment Rubrics. Additionally the Rubric for Program Learning Outcome Rubric was developed, discussed with available faculty and adopted for this assessment. The Alumni Survey was also reviewed and updated in preparation for the Program Review.

5. **Planned Assessment Activities**

The Gerontology Program will be participating in Program Review in AY 2009-10. This review will be done in conjunction with Asian and Women’s Studies. The program has elected to adopt the pilot format Option C that places the emphasis on outcome assessment as well as a focused inquiry.

Program Outcomes will be re-worded so they align more clearly with other departments’ verbiage. These will be ready for faculty approval at the first meeting September 2009.

Program Outcome Assessment using student Portfolios will continue, this time evaluating Outcome # 7 that states students who graduate with a baccalaureate in Gerontology will demonstrate Critical Thinking as a foundation for decision making. Along with this, the Program will develop an assessment tool to be used in the planned assessment of Outcome # 7.

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