

Assessment of Graduate Program Learning Objectives Spring 2014

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Graduate Program committee members were asked to read five (5) theses—which included all of the theses submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator by April 11, 2014. Prior to reviewing the theses, two program learning objectives were selected for assessment purposes and a rubric was created (see rubric file). Each objective was scored on a five point scale (5-highest to 1-lowest) to indicate whether the students exceeded, met, or did not meet expectations, respectively.

L.O. #2	<i>Integrate knowledge to understand and apply research methodology to criminal justice problems and decision making</i>						
							Mean
	3	3	3	5	3	3	3.33
	3	3	3	5	4	3	3.5
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	3	2	2	3	2	3	2.5
Mean	3	2.8	2.8	3.8	3	3	****

L.O. #6	<i>Demonstrate the capacity to integrate knowledge of the field of Criminal Justice</i>						
							Mean
	4	3	4	5	4	3	3.83
	3	3	4	5	4	3	3.67
	3	3	3	3	4	3	3.17
	3	3	4	3	3	3	3.17
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Mean	3.2	3	3.6	3.8	3.6	3	****

The data reveal some variation in the scores assigned by committee members. With one exception, students met or exceeded expectations associated with Learning Objective #2 - *integrate knowledge to understand and apply research methodology to criminal justice problems and decision making*. For Learning Objective #6 - *demonstrate the capacity to integrate knowledge of the field of Criminal Justice*, all students met or exceeded expectations held by committee members. In general, higher scores were assigned to students for their capacity to integrate knowledge of the Criminal Justice field than for integrating knowledge to understand and apply research methodology to criminal justice problems and decision making.

Discussion

One of the students submitting a thesis this semester struggled with methodological issues. In an effort to help her with this potential obstacle, the student received additional resources including methodology books and a number of meetings with her Thesis Chair, Second Reader, and/or the Graduate Program Coordinator. The meetings were held to discuss methodological concerns identified after reading a number of draft versions submitted for review. Despite one student's methodological struggle, it is clear from the assessment of this set of theses that students are meeting, if not exceeding, faculty expectations for the two graduate program learning objectives identified above.